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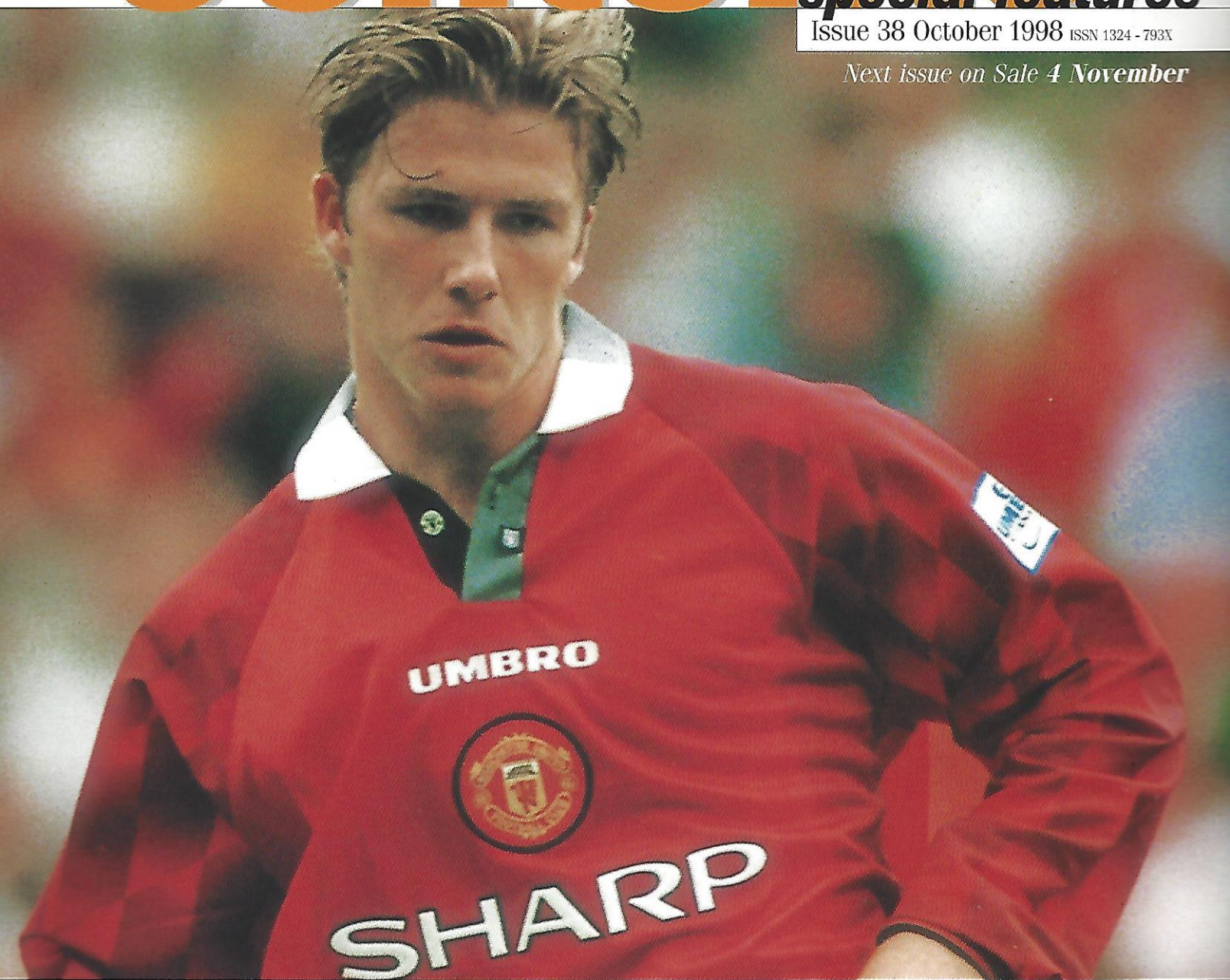
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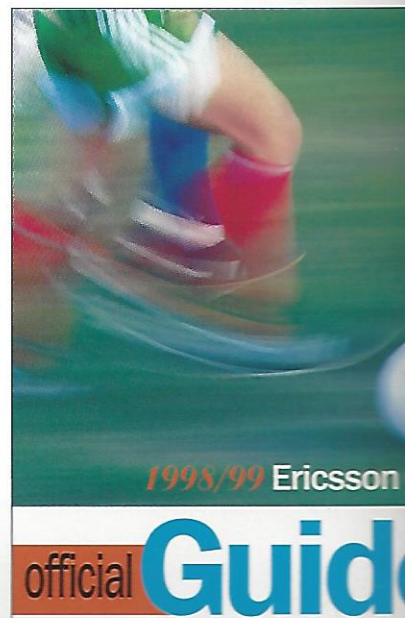
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FREE ENTRY IS ON US

Does \$330 worth of FREE ADMISSION tickets to Ericsson Cup games sound pretty cool?

Well, read on and find out how you can score this super deal from every new edition of your number one soccer publication, Soccer Australia.

Since the final whistle blew to end the 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Grand Final in May our footballing diet has been limited almost exclusively to hours huddled by the television watching action beamed in from around the globe.

With an albeit joyful World Cup winter now behind us, the Ericsson Cup swings back into action for what promises to be another landmark domestic season. And with our fabulous free ticket offer, we'll be with you all the way down the road to the grand final. Soccer Australia intends to provide second-to-none analysis of the season ahead. In fact our focus on the un-folding drama of the 1998/99 season starts in this preview edition as we feature the official Soccer Australia Ericsson Cup 44-page guide, starting on page 24.

And our commitment to the local game doesn't end there, because to help fill the terraces and grandstands at all the Ericsson Cup venues this summer Soccer Australia will once again feature its remarkably popular complimentary entry tickets over the course of the season.

The tickets proved a raging success for all the clubs who participated in the program last year and Soccer Australia would like to go on record to thank and the clubs who have shown commendable foresight in linking up with this magazine once again.

The inclusion of Northern Spirit adds another intriguing dimension to a thriving national competition and just to help whet your appetites this issue of Soccer Australia features an in-depth profile on the newest club in the competition. Of course there will be plenty of emphasis on the national teams, as well as exclusive coverage of the major European competitions such as Italy's Serie A and the English Premiership.

Our English Premier League preview and an exclusive behind-the-scenes at Chelsea are featured in this edition.

With the next World Cup being shared by South Korea and Japan we will also ensure maximum coverage of Asian football.

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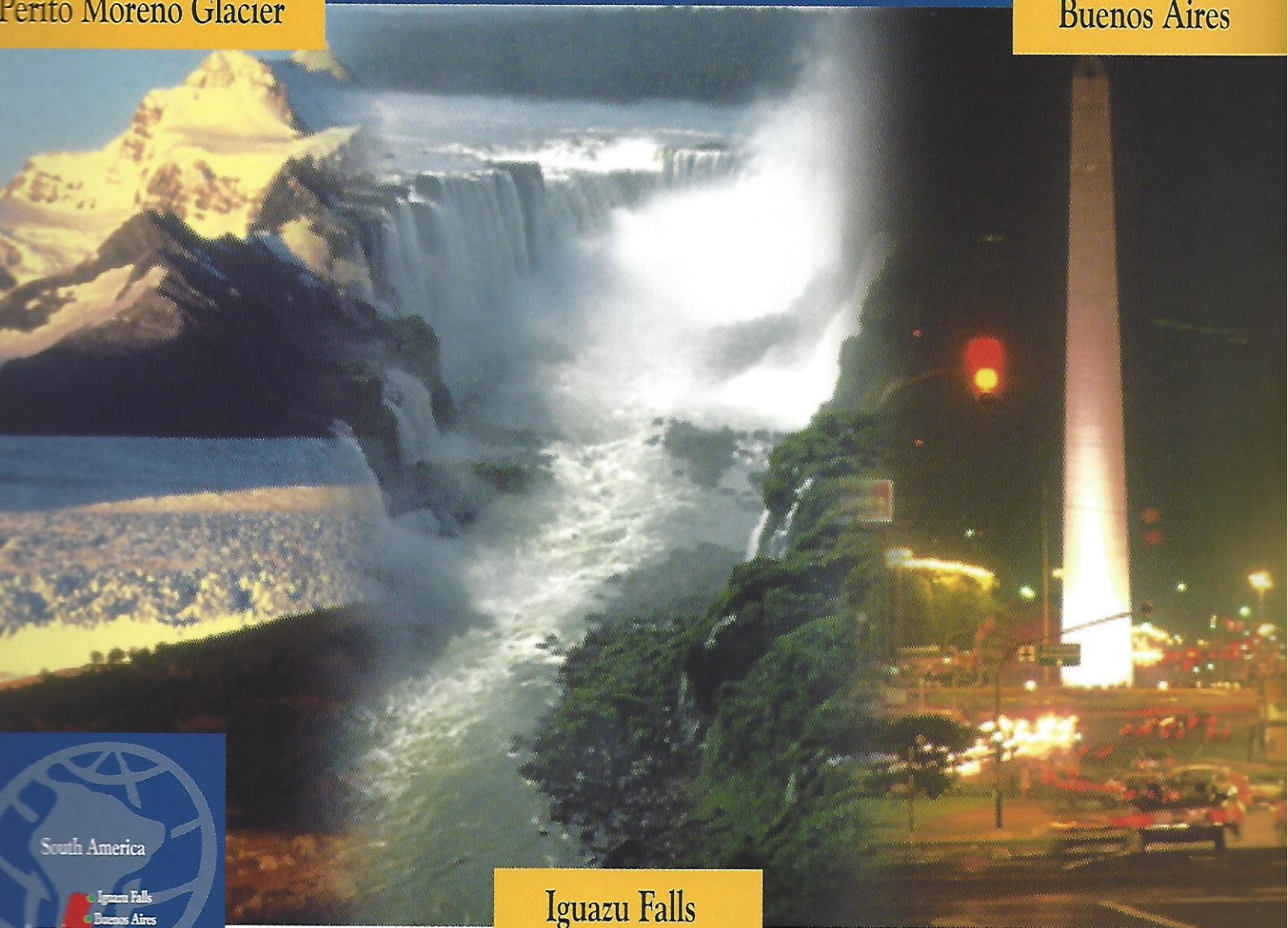
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Keeping Aussies in the Limelight

The English soccer media is finally waking up to something Australian fans have known for some time - that this country produces an extraordinary number of top class goalies. The English newspaper 'The Guardian' recently published a list of Aussie goalkeepers, under the heading 'They're overstretched and over here'. Published after the first game of the 1998/99 season, it indicated that none of the four Australian between the sticks on the opening day of the Premiership conceded a goal, an amazing achievement.

MARK BOSNICH - saved John Collins' penalty in Villa clean sheet (against Everton).

SASA ILIC - saved Richard Rufus' blushes (the Charlton defender sheet (against Newcastle United).

MARK SCHWARZER - saved from Aussie Kewell in Middlesbrough clean sheet (against Leeds United).

JOHN FILAN - saved a point in Blackburn clean sheet (against Derby).

FRANK TALIA - back in favour as Swindon shot-stopper.

JASON KEARTON - blooming at Crewe after Everton nightmare (Kearnton spent several years in Everton's reserve team as understudy to veteran keeper Neville Southall).

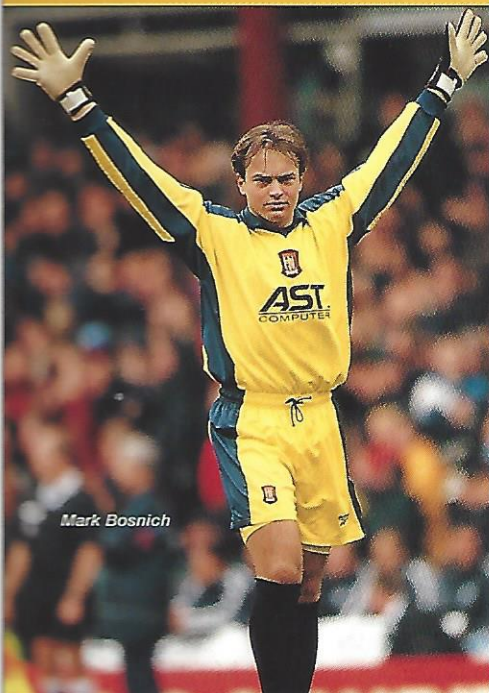
ANDREW PETTERSON - poised for the Premiership as Ilic understudy.

STEVE MAUTONE - his Reading replacement has already let in seven goals.

ZELJKO KALAC - tall guy to fall guy at Leicester and Portsmouth.

TYNAN SCOPE - headline writer's delight in reserve at Coventry.

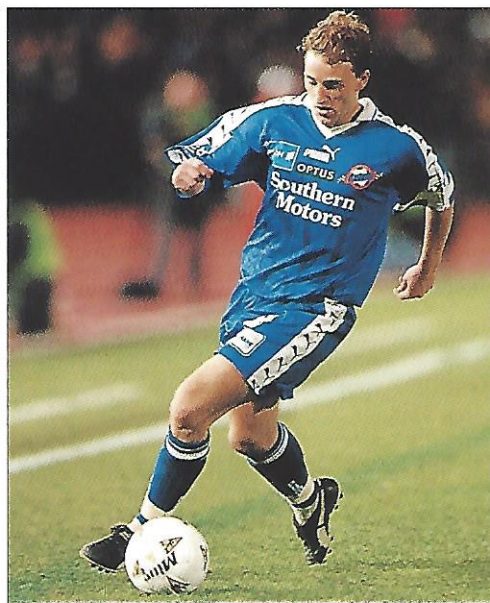
IAN HEALY - hoping to impress scouts on England tour.



Mark Bosnich



A STROLL AROUND THE WORLD GAME



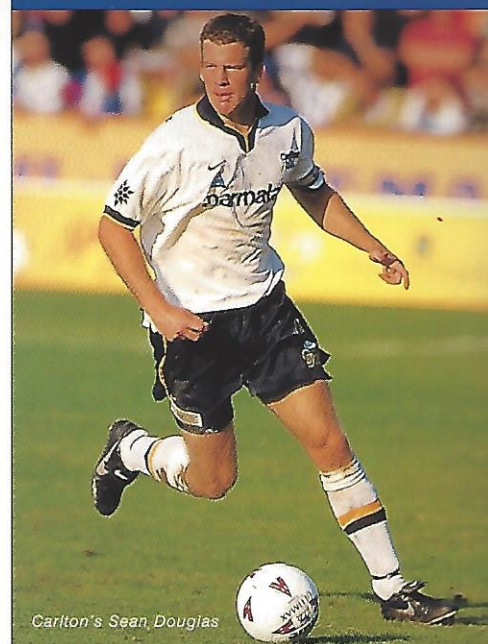
CHAMP'S MILESTONE

After adding championship-winning skipper to his already impressive career CV last season the little master, Paul Trimboli, is poised on the brink of another major milestone coming into the 1998/99 season.

The South Melbourne captain is a mere seven goals away from joining the elite list of Ericsson Cup players to have played 300 or more career games and scored 100 or more goals.

Trimboli, now on 318 games, passed his 300-game milestone last season and if he brings up his century of goals this season he will join recently-retired Rod Brown (347 games/137 goals) and Marshall Soper (318/120) as the only players to have completed such an impressive 'double treble'.

Own Goal For Media



Carlton's Sean Douglas

Given that historically rugby league in Victoria has been about as popular as boils or root canal work an extraordinary amount of media time and space was devoted to the achievements of Melbourne Storm as the ARL rookies prepared for that competition's semi-final series.

And good luck to the new boys too, to finish top four in the club's maiden season is a magnificent effort.

But you have to question the professionalism of the mainstream sporting media as they ignorantly sing the gushing praises of Storm, apparently completely ignoring the achievement of Carlton Soccer Club just six months ago.

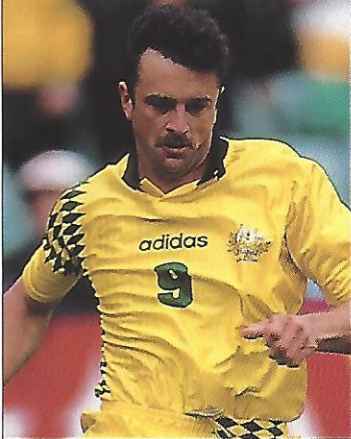
If you believe the Melbourne media neither Carlton - nor the Ericsson Cup competition for that matter - exist.

One who should know better is Tom Hafey, a three-club AFL Premiership-winning coach who prides himself on having a broad interest in all sports.

Yet in Melbourne's 'Herald Sun', according to Hafey, "what they (Storm) have achieved this year has been staggering. You look at other teams that have been established in other codes, they have struggled to win games. "They have just been percentage boosters for the opposition," he concluded.

For the record, Carlton's effort of going all the way to the grand final in season one (1997/98) is the best first-up effort by any new franchise in any of the major league footy codes played in this country.

Coach - Graham Arnold



The national league's newest club, ambitious Northern Spirit, will be hoping to follow in the wake of Carlton's first-up success last summer.

History is heavily weighted against the experimental Sydney-based club making any on-field impact, at least not this season.

But remarkable Carlton proved an exception to the general rule by literally going within ten minutes of a national championship in its first season when the Blues fell to a late South Melbourne goal in the 1997/98 Grand Final.

Carlton's first season was far and away the best-ever produced by a newcomer to this competition.

Before Carlton's barnstorming grand final run last year Perth Glory had been the best performed of all the recent newcomers, sitting inside the top six for 16 weeks in the summer of 1996/97 before dropping out on the very last day of the season.

Brisbane's entry to the big-time in 1991/92 produced a top six finish in season one; unfortunately the Strikers' sixth place finish was one year before the finals series was expanded from a top five play-off series.



Wollongong City has now been around for 19 seasons and is still waiting to crack it for the championship while eleven of the 24 teams promoted since 1977 are yet to play in a finals game at all.

Three clubs - Collingwood, Canterbury and Wollongong Mac lasted only one year in the big time, and nine of the 24 lasted less than seven years at the elite level.



Melbourne Zebras, now Bulleen Inter-Kings produced the best effort of a newly promoted team by winning the title in 1985, just one year after promotion.

Apia Leichhardt, which joined the league in 1979, took eight years to break through when it sealed the last of the league's first-past-the-post titles in 1987.

The Melbourne Knights took twelve years before they clinched the 1994/95 title and the Brisbane Strikers took six years to build a successful team after joining the league in 1991/92.

They are the only four non-original member clubs to have clinched a national title.

For the record, the original 14 national league clubs were Marconi Fairfield, Sydney Olympic, St George, Heidelberg United (then Fitzroy United), Melbourne City (then Footscray JUST), South Melbourne, Adelaide City, Adelaide Sharks (then West Adelaide), Canberra City, Brisbane City, Brisbane Lions, Mooroolbark, Western Suburbs and Sydney City (then Eastern Suburbs Hakoah)



Just three of the 24 clubs promoted to the Ericsson Cup competition since the competition was founded in 1977 have made the finals or finished in the ladder top six in their first season in.

Two of them - the Melbourne Knights and Melbourne Zebras (then Juventus) - made the finals when the going was at its best in 1984, the year the league split into two divisions of twelve teams each.

Making Carlton's grand final run last season appear even more exceptional.

PROMOTION BLUES FOR NEWCOMERS

Year	Club	Finished
1978	Newcastle United	11th
1979	Apia Leichhardt	8th
1980	Blacktown City	11th
1981	Wollongong City	11th
1981	Preston	12th
1984	Melbourne Knights	3rd
1984	Melbourne Zebras	5th
1984	Green Gully	9th
1984	Sunshine Geo. Cross	12th
1984	Sydney United	6th
1984	Penrith City	7th
1984	Parramatta Eagles	11th
1984	Newcastle Rosebud	8th
1985	Inter Monaro	7th
1986	Canterbury	11th
90/91	Wollongong Mac	14th
91/92	Brisbane Strikers	6th
91/92	Newcastle Breakers	11th
92/93	Gippsland Falcons	12th
95/96	Canberra Cosmos	9th
96/97	Collingwood Warriors	13th
96/97	Perth Glory	7th
97/98	Carlton	2nd
98/99	Northern Spirit	?

HILL GOES OUT ON A SAD NOTE inevitably the pundits get it right

The man soccer wooed with remarkable
and then turned on in numbers with
enthusiasm, David Hill, has quit as
man of Soccer Australia.
At the same time Mr Hill also resigned
post as chairman of Sydney Water,
saying he wanted to concentrate on his bid
in the NSW seat of Hughes at the next
election.

Although his resignation from SA
had been predicted - even eagerly
anticipated in some quarters - for several
months following his pre-selection as
the Labor candidate for Hughes, Hill
eventually decided to holster his six-guns
and ride into the sunset in the wake of the
possible realisation of Australia's World Cup
dreams.

Only days before the late August
announcement of his demise Soccer
Australia staff writer Philip Micallef broke
the story that the Asian Football
Confederation had finally conceded that it
would welcome the Socceroos in a full
World Cup qualifying series with the Asian
nations.

Micallef quoted Asian Football
Confederation general secretary Peter
Velappan as saying that "if FIFA retains the
quota of four Asian representatives for
2002, plus co-hosts Japan and South
Korea, and Australia ask to join us, I don't
think that Asia would oppose the proposal
because it is quite reasonable.

"We are fair and open-minded," said
Velappan, explaining the dramatic about-
face of the AFC. "We are, after all, looking
for an overall improvement in the football
standard in this region."

Obviously buoyed by the news, Hill
called the possibility of finally manouvering
Australia into qualification via the preferred
Asian route "terrific news for Australian
soccer".

"We must avoid at all costs a repeat of
last year's situation when we were knocked
out while still undefeated. In fact, we and
France are the only teams in the world that
did not lose a match in the whole 1998
competition."

Soccer Australia is currently preparing a
submission to FIFA outlining its preferred
options for a qualifying path for 2002
and beyond.

As for Hill, it is now likely that a stream-
lined World Cup qualifying path for
Australia, something he has passionately
fought to achieve, will be his final legacy to
the game, although not his only one.

His departure also follows in the wake of
a lucrative commercial television deal for
soccer which Hill had been adamant was
essential to the future of the code.

Accused of being overly autocratic,
dictatorial and abrasive, Hill made more
than his share of mortal enemies within the
game - but he is neither the first or last to
do so. It is not hard to do.

Lured into the game as a leader with the

tential to ensure a "sea change" at administrative level, at least Hill will bow to the vilified for his penchant for activity, as opposed to the inactivity of some of his predecessors.

Ironically, his first real confrontation with the old guard has proved to be, in hindsight, a resounding victory for Hill.

Hill's administration had no qualms about battling through a protracted, time-consuming, expensive and embarrassing legal duel when it was decided to streamline a stagnant national league by ditching Parramatta Eagles, Brunswick Juventus and Heidelberg United for the 1995/96 season.

Parramatta can be considered unlucky, but Heidelberg has since predictably tumbled to ignominious relegation from Victoria's Premier League and then-ailing Brunswick no longer even exists in its own right.

In contrast, the trade-ups have been stylishly effective, with Perth Glory and Carlton SC about to be joined by Northern Spirit as the bold new shop-fronts for the McCusson Cup into the next millennium.

Initial expressions of concern turned to angry vitriol as Hill's administration further antagonised many of the long-established ethnic-based clubs by banning nationalistic insignias, team names and uniforms.

Although the clubs eventually and mostly reluctantly adhered to the decision, the fact that such a dramatic edict was justified by SA as the key to commencing a national merchandising and marketing campaign which never eventuated, appears to have been conveniently forgotten.

The late-1996 signing of flamboyant former England boss Terry Venables as Socceroo coach further polarised the soccer community.

Seen as a recruiting and publicity coup in some quarters and dismissed by others - SBS-TV's Les Murray called it the "height of silliness" - the capture of Venables only served to underscore the great divide opening between Hill's supporters and his detractors.

For all the successes on and off the field under 'Oz Tel' Hill's tenure was always going to be limited when the Socceroos crumbled at the final hurdle at the MCG last November, the World Cup failure the cue for the vultures to

And that in itself is the greatest tragedy, as soccer once again managed to perpetuate the game's ugly image in this country.

Witness the *'Australian'* newspaper's sport section just days after the chairman's

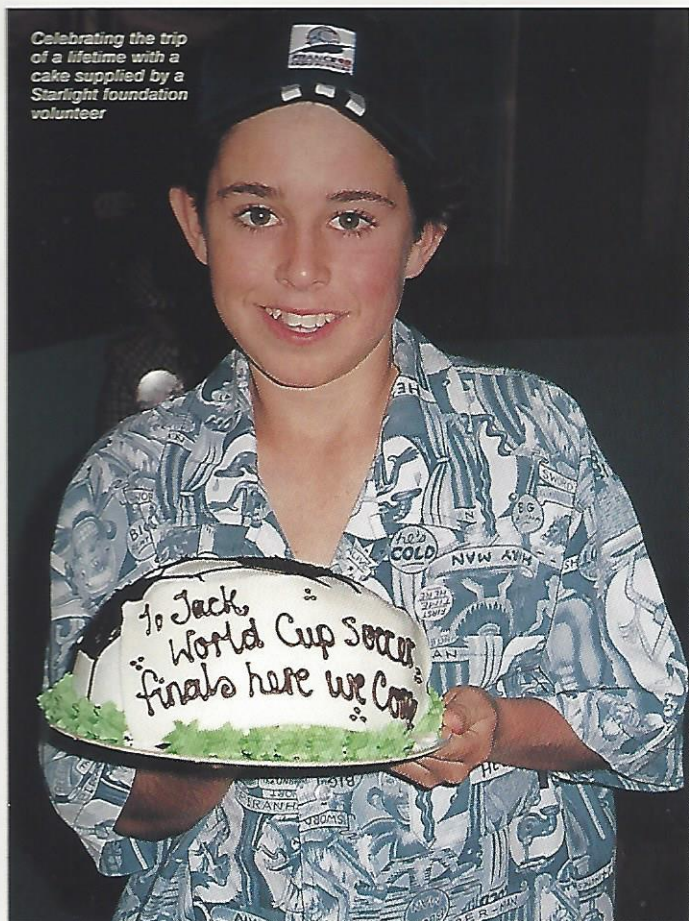


commence circling.

Hill's penchant for going toe-to-toe with his antagonists, whether it be the players union, journalists or club officials, meant there were plenty waiting to put the boot in - sadly, many of them were prepared to do so very publicly.

announcement, with a huge cartoon caricature of Hill walking away from soccer with several daggers firmly planted in his back because he "couldn't stand their (soccer's) politics".

Celebrating the trip of a lifetime with a cake supplied by a Starlight foundation volunteer



Jack Byrne

World football attention is too often focused on glitz, glamour, egos and bank balances. In what is often a cold and clinical business our own *Ray Gatt* has uncovered one of the most heart-warming football-related stories to run in this magazine, about a little champion who is a superstar in his own right.

Jack Byrne is not unlike thousands of football-crazy teenagers across the country. With round ball at his feet he can usually be seen in the backyard or in the park imitating his favourite all-time player, Pele, or living out his dream of scoring the winning goal for the Socceroos in a World Cup final.

As a midfielder with the Killarney Districts under 14's, little Jack doesn't get on the scoresheet but, despite giving away size to most of his opponents, he is quite adept at setting up his team-mates to score the goals.

Living at Bateau Bay on the picturesque NSW central coast, he often tags along with his father Adrian, mother Kim and younger brothers Billy, 12, and Josh, 10, to watch the Newcastle Breakers in the Ericsson Cup national league.

On the surface, there is nothing special about this story. It's a typical scenario, acted day in and day out all around the country. But, there is a remarkable twist to this tale. It might well be a story of a trip of a lifetime. But, for the most part, it is a story about the bravery of a little boy and

his family, some much deserved luck, some help from a couple of corporate giants and the considerable lending hand of a wonderful organisation known as the Starlight Foundation.

Jack's story goes back two years when he was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour and underwent surgery followed by

a series of a debilitating radiation treatment. According to father Adrian, Jack is now in remission "and back to playing terrific soccer with his local club". While the radiation has affected his growth, the Byrne family have been counting their blessings seeing their son being able to lead a fairly normal life.



Jack, Josh and Billy gearing up for the Nigeria v Paraguay clash

The family neither sought nor expected anything else other than having their son back safe and sound following the delicate surgery and watching him make a recovery. So, you can imagine the disbelief and emotion when out of the blue, the family received a call from the Starlight Foundation, which had been informed of Jack's plight through the family counsellor.

The foundation is a remarkable organisation dedicated to raising money to help children with serious illnesses.

Adrian takes up the story:

"The foundation asked Jack if he had a wish, what would it be. Well, it took about six months to decide but, being a football family and with the World Cup coming up, there was only one decision," he explained.

"Actually, Jack's wish was to meet his hero Pele at the World Cup, but the foundation said that was two wishes. So he settled for the Cup.

"But, I don't know that the people at Starlight realised the magnitude of the World Cup, for they had a few problems, especially in trying to secure tickets for matches.

"Still, they were magnificent to us, especially Margie Stephen, a co-ordinator for the foundation. She is a fantastic lady."

Through the help of the Starlight Foundation the entire Byrne family packed their bags and headed for Spain and France for 28 days and the trip of which dreams are made.

Before leaving Sydney, they were handed a copy of Soccer Australia's World Cup magazine and Adrian says it was a fabulous source of entertainment and fun for the family.

"It was our soccer bible," Adrian wrote in a heart-warming letter to us.

"Everyone in the family read the magazine from the first page to the last."

Once in France, Jack got to see three games, including the final, though there were a few hiccups.

On hearing of the ticket problems, Mastercard, Coca-Cola, Snickers and Craig McLatchey, the secretary general of the

Australian Olympic Committee and a former Young Soccerroo, stepped in with prized tickets.

McLatchey takes up the story:

"Starlight got in touch with me as I was

"He is such a great kid and character and I was only too happy to help."

For his part, Jack described his venture as "cool".

"I loved it, especially the final...it was just the best," Jack told Soccer Australia.

Jack, whose favourite Australian player is Aurelio Vidmar, said he particularly enjoyed returning home and going to school at Mater Del College, where his father also teaches, to tell his friends all about his trip.

Adrian also had a tale to tell about the family experience on the night of the final.

"Jack was inside the ground but the rest of us made our way to the Hippodrome, a racetrack on the outskirts of Paris where they had a huge screen showing the match live," he said.

"It was an unbelievable atmosphere with flags, flares, horns, drums, colour and about 50,000 people. It was almost better than being in the Stade de France because all those things were banned.

"Anyway, after the game we tried to get back to the hotel to pick up Jack but all the transport had closed down. Kim, myself and the two boys eventually got a lift from a Frenchman, who decided to bypass the traffic jam by driving on the wrong side of the road.

"It was a little scary, but it was funny as well because there was a whole line of cars which decided to follow us. Anyway, we eventually got back to the hotel at about 3:30 in the morning.

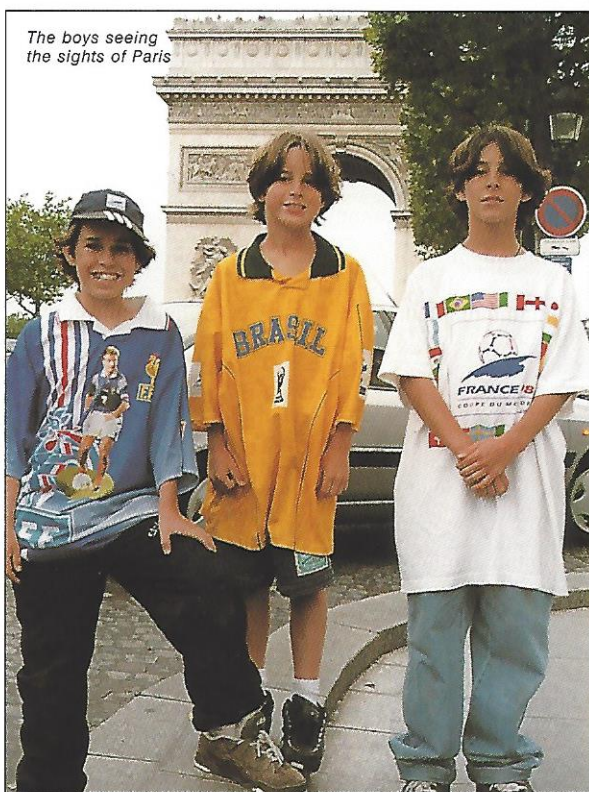
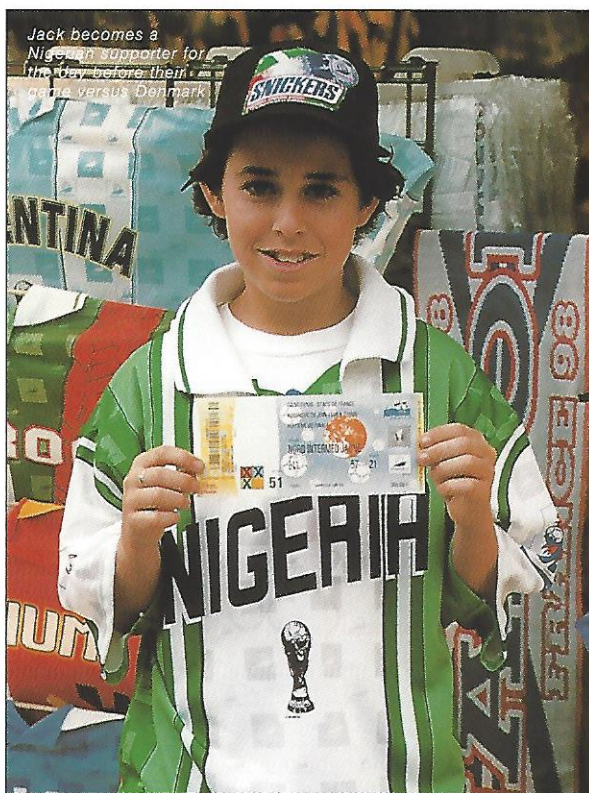
"We weren't really worried because we knew Jack would be well looked after."

Indeed, McLatchey made sure of that as he looked after Jack at the hotel while celebrations went on.

While there, a group which runs the Asian Football League in Hong Kong took to Jack after hearing of his story and

showered him with gifts.

According to McLatchey, the upshot is that the AFL has promised to try to start a similar scheme to that run by the Starlight Foundation and help kids with serious illnesses.



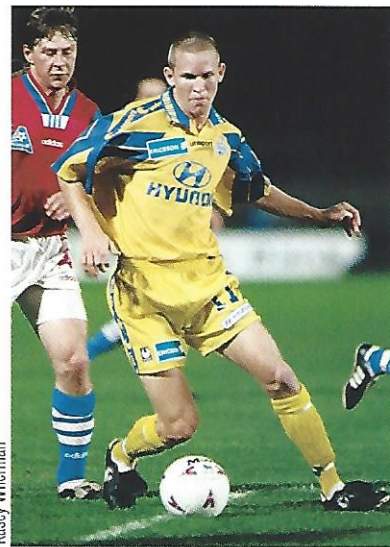
going over for some holidays. One of the sponsors had let them down and I was fairly confident I could get Jack a ticket for the final.

"I'll never forget the final and the look of awe on Jack's face. It was a wonderful day.

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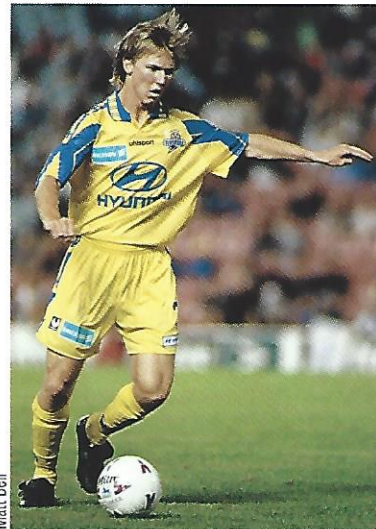
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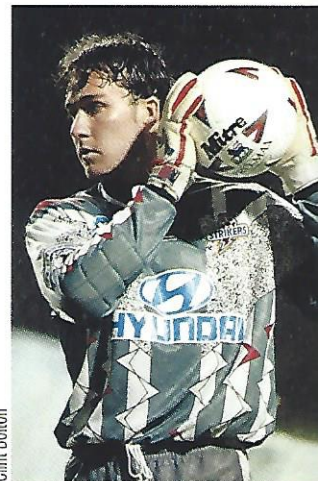
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RIZZO

ON THE RISE

It's early days yet for Nick Rizzo, but the indications are that the teenager from Sydney has the potential to join Mark Bosnich, Stan Lazaridis and Harry Kewell as a certified star in the English Premiership. *Melina Boursinos* spoke to the young midfielder on the eve of his transfer from Liverpool to Crystal Palace.

He is faster than a speeding bullet, quicker than a moving train and it is only a matter of time before Australian Nick Rizzo is given the opportunity to prove that he has what it takes to play among England's football greats.

It is hard for the 18-year-old to believe that it was not so long ago he was sitting at home in Sydney contemplating his future. Two years on and his dream of playing professional football in one of the toughest leagues in the world has become a reality. Look out Harry Kewell, Rizzo is set to become the next Australian to make a name for himself in England.

From the moment he signed a professional contract with Liverpool, he has never looked back. He recalls those early days and describes moving to England as tough, but it is clear that his optimism and confidence have been the driving forces behind his success.





"Before I left, I was playing for the Sydney Olympic youth team. I got the best clips of me playing and I made a video and sent it to various clubs through an agent. I got responses from seven or eight clubs, including Manchester United, and I went for trials.

"I eventually signed with Liverpool when I was 17. Since then I've been on the bench six times and played in a friendly match against Glasgow Rangers. In the beginning

it was difficult to adjust to the way of life and the climate, but my mum is also living with me and I found it has helped a lot. Both my parents have sacrificed a lot for me and I really appreciate it."

Rizzo is not the first player to slip through our youth ranks unnoticed and he won't be the last. He took a chance, and although there are never any guarantees, he has placed himself in an ideal position to achieve his goals. He admits that working

with players of such prestige and talent, in particular Steve McManaman, Jamie Redknapp and Michael Owen, has greatly influenced his development.

"They make you look good, simply by the way they position themselves. They are always willing to offer you advice, and because they are so experienced and they know so much, you take it on board." Earlier this year Nick burst into the Olyroos line-up and created a storm, playing an integral role in all three matches against Brazil. It was clear when watching him play that his skill level, speed and ball control are exceptional. His performance was pure class, and if his aim was to be noticed there is no doubt it was achieved.

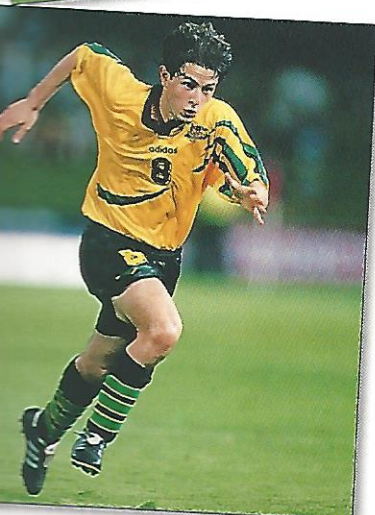
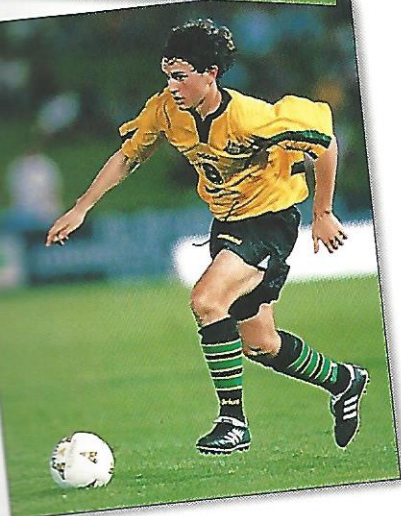
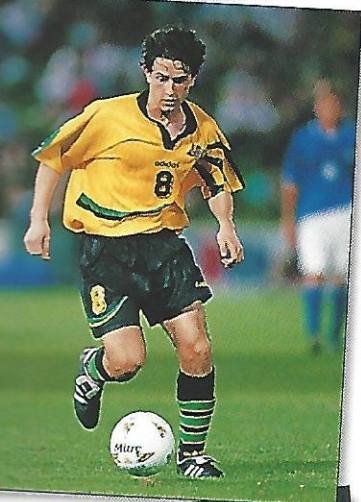
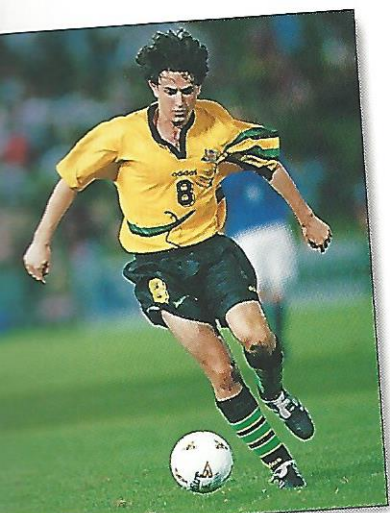
"It was an honour playing for Australia. It was great playing in front of my family and friends and many of them hadn't seen me play before. The crowd were fantastic and I'm really looking forward to the Sydney 2000 Games."

Olyroo team-mate and friend Vince Grella describes him as a very professional character with a great attitude and work ethic. "Nick is an easy-going guy who fits in well with the team. It is an accolade that he is playing for such a big club. He isn't the biggest player in physique, but he knows how to get the ball. I watch a lot of English football on TV and I can see him making a successful career."

Every year there are players who venture overseas to play professional football, only to return shortly after with bruised egos and shattered dreams. However, it seems Nick was ready for a challenge. He now eats and breathes football six days a week and loves every minute of it.

"I think that if you go overseas with the attitude that it's going to be difficult and you're not going to do well, then you won't succeed. When I went to England I always believed that I was going to make it and I'm still there."

Liverpool manager Roy Evans describes Rizzo as an "exciting" prospect. It may not be long before the gregarious young gun is on the field exciting Crystal Palace fans.



Walking in their footsteps

Nick Rizzo may well become the next Australian to make an impact in the English Premiership - if Crystal Palace can win promotion this season. He'll be following in the footsteps of some of the best players this country has ever produced. Here's the full honour roll of Aussies who have appeared in England's top division.

1950s

JOE MARSTON (*Preston North End*)

Marston was the first Australian to make an impact in the English first division. Played for Preston North End in the 1954 FA Cup final and his status as an Australian soccer legend is recognised by the annual awarding of the Marston medal for best on ground at the Ericsson Cup grand final.

1970s

ADRIAN ALSTON (*Luton Town*)

Rejected a possible move to West Germany to join newly-promoted Luton immediately after the Socceroos' only finals appearance. Alston top scored for the Hatters in 1974/75, but after falling out with the Luton management was transferred to Cardiff City the following season.

JOHN KOSMINA (*Arsenal*)

Kosmina played three UEFA Cup games for Arsenal in 1978/79, but made just one league appearance for the Gunners, in their opening fixture of the same season against Leeds. He returned to Australia soon after.

1980s

CRAIG JOHNSTON (*Liverpool*)

Johnston was part of the relentless Liverpool machine which claimed trophy after trophy in the 1980s. His crowning achievements were playing in the Reds' 1984 European Cup-winning team and scoring for Liverpool against Everton in the 1986 FA Cup final.

ALAN DAVIDSON (*Nottingham Forest*)

Davidson's classy defensive work for the Socceroos in the early 1980s had him earmarked for bigger and better things. When his chance came with Nottingham Forest, however, injuries limited his first-team appearances for Brian Clough's side. Davidson returned home and 14 years and several clubs later was still turning out for Melbourne Knights when required.

1990s

MARK BOSNICH (*Aston Villa*)

A star of the 1991 World Youth Championship, Bosnich has won two winner's medals with Aston Villa - in the 1994 and 1996 League Cup finals. Occasionally lands himself in hot water - his Fawltw Towers 'Nazi' salute and nearly beheading Jurgen Klinsmann spring to mind - but the flamboyant one-time Sydney United keeper is one of the pin-up players of the Premier League.

ROBBIE SLATER (*Blackburn Rovers, West Ham & Southampton*)

After an excellent season with Blackburn Rovers in 1994/95, the Red Baron became the first (and so far only) Australian to claim a Premiership medal. Slater left Rovers to join West Ham before moving to Southampton, where his tireless efforts in midfield made him a favourite with Saints fans. He joined first division Wolverhampton Wanderers early this year.

JASON KEARTON (*Everton*)

Understudy to the Everton's durable goalkeeper Neville Southall for several seasons. After a handful of senior games, Kearton joined Crewe Alexandra where he is still going strong.

JOHN FILAN (*Coventry & Blackburn*)

Another goalkeeping understudy who hasn't done a lot wrong during limited first-team opportunities. Reserve first to Steve Ogrizovic at Coventry and then Tim Flowers at Blackburn, Filan was desperately unlucky to break an arm in a 7-2 win against Sheffield Wednesday early last season while Flowers was out injured. He is now fully recovered.

ADEM PORIC (*Sheffield Wednesday*)

A member of the 1991 Young Socceroos squad which finished fourth in Portugal, Poric managed only a handful of appearances for Sheffield Wednesday despite several years on the club's books. Now playing for Notts County.

STAN LAZARIDIS (*West Ham Utd*)

An established Premiership star after injury slowed his early momentum following a move from Adelaide Sharks. Has just completed his third season in England during which he scored one of the goals of the season, a 30-metre screamer against FA Cup finalist Newcastle United.

MARK SCHWARZER (*Middlesbrough*)

Signed from Bradford City in 1997, the athletic former Marconi keeper has already played for Middlesbrough in two League Cup finals at Wembley. The blond custodian is regarded as crucial to Boro's attempts to stay in the Premier League in 1998/99 after promotion last season.

KEVIN MUSCAT (*Crystal Palace*)

The tough-tackling Victorian began last season with newly-promoted Crystal Palace and acquitted himself well. He joined Wolverhampton Wanderers mid-campaign and helped his new club to an FA Cup semi-final appearance against Arsenal.

CARL VEART (*Crystal Palace*)

Limited opportunities to make an impact in the Premier League after helping Palace to the top flight in 1996/97. The ex-Adelaide City forward joined second division Millwall early last season.

HARRY KEWELL (*Leeds United*)

Virtually unknown at the start of last season, the fresh-faced Kewell finished 1997/98 as one of the hottest young prospects in English football. Leeds manager George Graham has made it clear that Kewell is central to his plans to restore the Yorkshire club to its former glory.

SASA ILIC (*Charlton*)

The talented young goalkeeper's heroics ensured Charlton's success in last season's play-offs and he starts 1998/99 as the club's Premiership first-choice custodian.

Korean supporters also known as the Red Devils celebrate



ASIAN HOPES

With Home Sweet Home

France's stunning World Cup success in July served to underscore the value of home advantage on the world stage. The performances of Asian teams in the France '98 tournament was hugely disappointing and hopes for improvement in four years time will be critical to the success of the 2002 series in Japan and South Korea. *Phillip Micallef* looks at the problems facing Asia and Oceania after the France '98 flop.

Make no mistake, Asia's performance in France '98 was poor and hugely disappointing. It showed that there's a lot of work to be done before this part of the world can catch up with the superpowers from Europe and South America. A single victory from a dozen games does not augur well for the region as it prepares to hold the first World Cup of the next millenium in Japan and South Korea.

Iran and Japan were probably the best-performed teams. Iran, who beat Australia in a playoff for the right to play in France, performed reasonably well against Germany and Yugoslavia, losing narrowly on both occasions, and even managed to beat the United States 2-1 in Lyon for their first ever finals victory. Golden boy Medhi Mahdavia scored the winning goal seven minutes from time.

Japan can consider themselves unlucky to be returning home empty handed from their first journey into World Cup football when they could so easily have earned a draw from each of their games with Argentina, Croatia and Jamaica. The Japanese were particularly unlucky against

the Croats and fell to a late goal from Davor Suker, after creating and missing several chances.

Not for the first time, Japan were let down by poor finishing. Hidetoshi Nakata, Asia's footballer of the year, was the pick of the Japanese team and his industry and creativity in midfield did not go unnoticed. Nakata, 21, has since signed a contract with newly-promoted Italian Serie A club Perugia.

If the Iranians and Japanese can draw some consolation from France '98, South Korea and Saudi Arabia were an absolute disaster. The Koreans never got going in the tournament and were beaten 3-1 by Mexico, thrashed 5-0 by Holland and drew 1-1 with mediocre Belgium. Saudi Arabia were a shadow of the enterprising side that won so many friends at USA 94 and after losing 1-0 to Denmark, they lost their heads against France and were spanked 4-0 before they signed off with 2-2 draw with South Africa.

Japan, South Korea and Saudi Arabia caught the eye with their neat approach but had no player capable of finishing off

AUSTRALIA'S ONLY REGIONAL TEAM
IN THE ERICSSON CUP COMPETITION



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Holland's Denis Berckamp with South Korea's Choi Young-Li at France 98. South Korea went down 5-0.

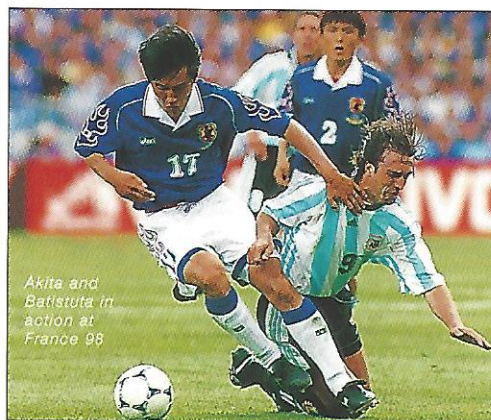
promising moves. Both countries underlined their frustration by sacking respective coaches, Cha Bum Kun and Carlos Alberto Parreira, midway through their participation in the tournament. Japan's Takeshi Okada resigned soon after Japan's elimination became official.

Which brings us to the Australian angle. If the Socceroos failed to beat the fourth-best Asian team in the qualifiers, just where does our football stand? Bearing in mind that some players who formed the mainstay of our bid to reach France - not to mention coach Terry Venables - are now gone, Australia appears to have a bit of rebuilding to do in order to mount a serious challenge for 2002.

The scramble for places in 2002 will be nothing less than a dogfight, primarily because there might not be as many places allotted to the lesser confederations as there were in France. New FIFA president Sepp Blatter said quite clearly during his

election campaign leading up to the World Cup in France that Asia, Africa and Concacaf must justify their claims for places in the 2002 finals by performing on the field in 1998.

Mexico, Nigeria and Morocco justified their existence with strong performances -



Akita and Batistuta in action at France 98.

the Mexicans and Nigerians reached the second round and the Moroccans were desperately unlucky not to do so - the USA, Jamaica, Cameroon, South Africa, Tunisia and the four Asians generally did not.

With pressure mounting from Europeans

to have more teams in the World Cup, it would be surprising if there are more than nine teams (four from Africa, two from Concacaf and three from Asia or Oceania) from the three regions joining hosts Japan and South Korea in 2002. Asia and Africa will fight to the death to retain their quota - plus the two co-hosts - but if they fail, Australia's path to the finals would become even harder.

If this scenario eventuates, the Socceroos probably would have to beat the third and not fourth team in Asia to reach 2002. Unless, of course, FIFA allows Australia to join the Asian countries in a full-scale qualification series. Asia has said it would welcome such a concept. "If Australia want to join us and FIFA retains its present quota of Asian teams - and there is absolutely no reason it should not - we will not oppose the idea," Asian Football Confederation general secretary Peter Velappan says.

"If the Socceroos failed to beat the fourth-best Asian teams in the qualifiers, just where does our football stand?"

ASIA'S POOR PERFORMANCE IN FRANCE

The four Asian teams that qualified for France '98 went back home early and pretty disappointed with their overall results. Iran recorded Asia's only win when they beat the United States while Japan, South Korea and especially Saudi Arabia were a huge disappointment.

THE ASIAN RESULTS IN FRANCE

GROUP C

Saudi Arabia - Denmark 0-1

Saudi Arabia - France 0-4

Saudi Arabia - South Africa 2-2

GROUP E

South Korea - Mexico 1-3

South Korea - Holland 0-5

South Korea - Belgium 1-1

GROUP F

Iran - Yugoslavia 0-1

Iran - USA 2-1

Iran - Germany 0-2

GROUP H

Japan - Argentina 0-1

Japan - Croatia 0-1

Japan - Jamaica 1-2

ALEX TOBIN'S VERDICT ON THE ASIANS

Socceroo captain Alex Tobin has no doubts Japan and South Korea will be forces to be reckoned with in the 2002 World Cup on home soil.

"Both South Korea and Japan will have learnt from their experience in France and they can look forward to 2002 with confidence," Tobin says.

"The Japanese especially did enough in their first-ever World Cup to suggest they would do well again at home. There were moments when they looked very good but they were not as consistent as Argentina and Croatia. The Koreans, too, impressed with their physical condition and managed to create many chances against Mexico with a man short (after Ha Seok Ju was sent off



South Korea's
Sang Chul Yoo in action

two minutes after scoring)."

Tobin says Iran and Saudi Arabia were a huge disappointment.

"The Iranians looked good in parts but were never able to put in a whole 90 minutes while the Saudis, after having achieved reasonable success in Asian football, were found wanting on a world stage," Tobin explained.

Tobin hopes Australia will have a better chance of reaching the 2002 finals if they are included in an Asian group instead of having to play an Asian side

on a one-off basis.

"Over 10 or 12 games one can afford to slip-up because there is time to recover in a playoff there's no second chance," he says.



South Korea's Kim D.H.

CARLTON SOCCER

1998-99 Membership Guide

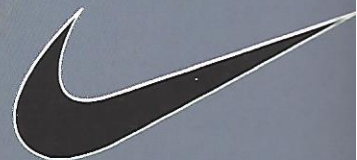


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Japanese supporters also known as Ultra Nippon do the Mexican Wave

THE DAY NORTH KOREA HUMBLLED THE MIGHT OF ITALY

North Korea's stunning performance in the 1966 World Cup remains the highest point of Asian soccer.

The North Koreans were given little chance of surviving a tough group featuring the Soviet Union, Italy and Chile, but after losing their first match 3-0 to the slick Soviets, the Koreans raised a few eyebrows by grabbing a 1-1 draw with Chile in the next match.

However, nobody was quite prepared for what happened in their next match in Middlesbrough against the Azzurri, replete with world-class players and among the favourites for the title. The Koreans took the lead on the stroke of half-time with a good goal from Pak Doo Ik, who beat Enrico Albertosi with a low shot.

The Italians hit the Koreans with

everything they had in the second half but could not find a way past a resolute defence made up of six, seven and even eight men.

North Korea went on to win 1-0 to earn a place in the quarter-finals while the humiliated Italians caught an early plane home.

In the quarter-finals North Korea ran into a free-scoring Portuguese side and looked like causing another major sensation when they took a shock 3-0 lead after only 24 minutes. Portugal eventually steadied themselves and striker Eusebio helped himself to four goals in a 5-3 victory.

It is 32 years now since the Koreans lit up the north-east of England with their free-spirited displays.

No Asian team has yet emulated them.

ASIA LOOKS FORWARD TO 2002

Asian Football Confederation general

secretary Peter Velappan says he was more than satisfied with the performance of the Asian teams in France '98.

"It is true that none of the four teams managed to reach the second round but overall the quality of our football was of a high standard," he says.

"We were encouraged by our teams' results and tactics, which were better than in 1994. I have written to the four respective associations and told them to keep their heads high. We have nothing to be ashamed of because we have played better football in France than ever before.

"Japan were our best performers and should have made the second round but they missed many chances, especially against Croatia. Even Iran did very well to lose only 2-0 to Germany and 1-0 to Yugoslavia and beat the United States.

"There has been talk of our quota being reduced in the next World Cup but we won't accept that. We expect to have the same number of teams plus co-hosts South Korea and Japan in 2002.

"The World Cup belongs to all six confederations and I believe our quota is fair. Besides, the very reason the competition was expanded from 24 teams to 32 was to give teams from such areas as Concacaf, Asia, Africa and Oceania a better chance of performing at the game's highest level."



South Korea's Jung-Won Seo in action against Japan



1998/99 Ericsson Cup

official **Guide**

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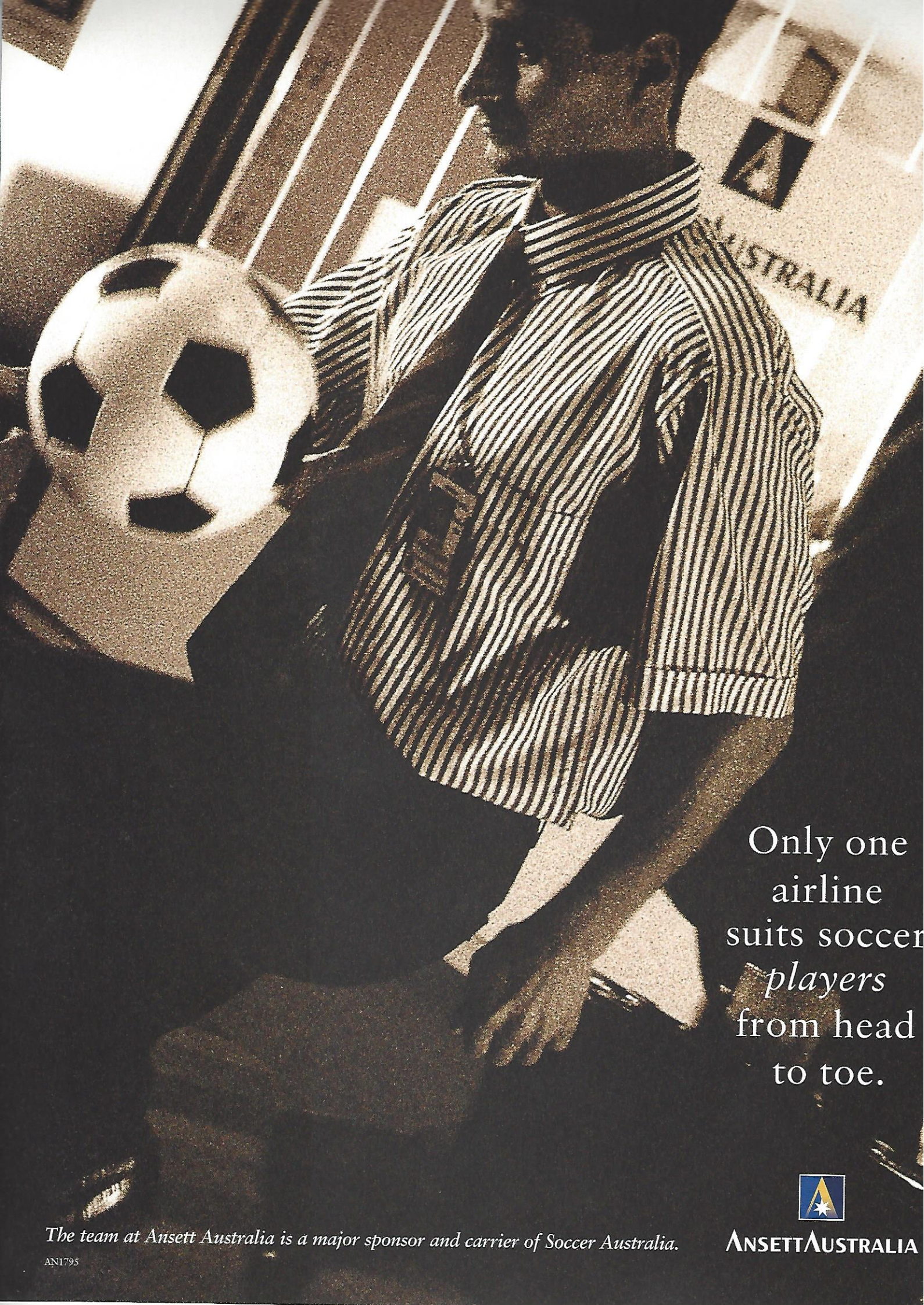
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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, DAVID WOOLLEY

WITH MORE TEAMS, more games, more fans and more media exposure, the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season promises to be the biggest in the history of the league.

The advent of Northern Spirit, located in North Sydney, will see fifteen teams compete around the country. Combine this with a competition of 30 rounds, and the fans will definitely have plenty of football to look forward to.

The season promises to be a cracker and Channel 7's involvement will be the perfect medium to take soccer followers around Australia through the season.

We are not only encouraged by the involvement of commercial television, but also with the current state of Australian soccer. In addition to the continuing success of our National teams and overseas-based Australians, we proudly acknowledge the talent and skill of the players that compete in the Ericsson Cup.

Enhancing the domestic league are the return of players of the calibre of Robbie Slater and Graham Arnold plus the growing influence of the Olyroo and Young Socceroo players in the Ericsson Cup.

I would like to thank Ericsson Australia, support sponsors, the players and clubs, staff and officials, whose support and commitment are instrumental to the continuing growth and success of the Ericsson Cup.

David Woolley
Chief Executive
Soccer Australia

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As sponsors of the Ericsson Cup we are delighted at how well the media has taken up the challenge of reporting and promoting this great game.

The reporters and photographers, the camera operators, the technicians, and directors who bring the world's most popular game to our air waves, screens and newspapers are a vitally important component of the game.

Soccer Australia has truly come of age and we at Ericsson Australia are proud and delighted to be part of this growing success.

We have now passed the half-way mark of our five year association with Soccer Australia and can report that our sponsorship has been an outstanding success.

We are one of the world's largest telecommunications suppliers with more than 100,000 employees in more than 130 countries. Wherever we are, soccer is played.

Ericsson entered into an agreement with Soccer Australia convinced that soccer was the vehicle to carry our international brand into the homes and hearts of millions of Australians who are increasingly becoming consumers of Ericsson products and services.

This linkage between our investment in soccer and our success in the marketplace is no accident. This bold national competition in a young emerging soccer nation can be judged by the number of players of international calibre that are emerging from the Ericsson Cup competition.

With the continued support of the media and the new commercialisation of soccer, I am confident that soccer is poised to gain increasing prominence in the Australian sporting calendar.

Ericsson Australia is proud to support Australian soccer and its growing role as a viable force in world soccer.

Kjell Sorme
Managing Director
Ericsson Australia

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Paddington (PO Box 175), NSW 2021

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Facsimile: (02) 9380 6155



Adelaide City



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Strip supplier: Kappa

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MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Zoran Matic

Mobile: 0412 855 630

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Hindmarsh Stadium

Address: Holden Street, Hindmarsh

Telephone: (08)8346-1055

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 8,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car Parking: Holden Street (50 spots),

Manton Street (150 spots)

Nearest Train Station: Bowden Railway

Station, 10 minute walk from stadium

Train Station Telephone: (08)8217-4111

Nearest Taxi Rank: Milner Street, Hindmarsh

Taxi telephone: (08)8211-8888

Nearest Bus Stop: Manton Street

(outside stadium).

Buses telephone: (08)8287-4777

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CLUB SHOP

Address: Hindmarsh Stadium

Opening Hours: Match days

Telephone: (08)8346 1055

SOCCER

AUSTRALIA



Player Profile - Alex Tobin

Born: 3-11-1965 in Melbourne **Height:** 1.90m **Weight:** 80kg
Signed From: West Torrens Birkalla **Position:** Defender
Representative Honours: SA, Australia U-20s, Senior Team (capt)

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1984-97/98	Adelaide City	376	24

EVER WONDERED WHAT it would be like to captain your club and country in every game you play? Stifling pressure, interspersed with probing questions from team-mates, club officials and those perennial pests, journalists. Then it's boots on and another star performance.

In the matchday program for Australia's World Cup clash with Iran, Tobin was quoted as saying: "I honestly never ever thought that I would captain my country."

The Soccerroo and Adelaide City skipper leads his country by example, not unlike England's Alan Shearer.

However, the Newcastle United striker does not have the media skills of Tobin. In one of England's leading soccer monthlies, Match Of The Day, Shearer was described as having: "...the bank account of Rothschild...and the phrase 'blood out of a stone' could have been invented for him."

During the Soccerroos' 1997 World Cup qualifiers, Tobin became Australia's soccer spokesman.

Nothing seems to daunt the clean-cut 32-year-old.

"Hopefully I don't come across as a rambling idiot."

When he's on the pitch, the love-affair

with the human race comes to an end. His steel-like resolve to win the ball - at all costs - leaves his opponents with respect and occasionally a stud mark as a parting gift...

Tobin pushes hard questions away about his future and past with the skill of an experienced Federal MP. What about his club and Soccerroo commitments?

"Staying with Adelaide City is the way to go for me. My international future is up to me. I was heartened by the fact that there were so many 36-year-olds at France 98."

On the issue of the television deal Soccer Australia has secured for the next decade, Tobin, who made his international debut in 1988, comments: "It's a wonderful bonus for the players. They (Channel 7) will show the players as being celebrities. It will give the spectators a chance to relate to the players, one on one. That's something the players will look forward to."

Championship Tip:

Adelaide City

Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

Club History

LAST YEAR: 5th
YEARS IN NSL:
 3rd - 1977 to 1998/99
Honours: Champions -
 1986, 1991/92 & 1993/94
 Runners up - 1992/93 &
 1994/95

Cup Winners - 1979, 1989 &
 1991/92
 Cup runners up - 1978
 Finalists - 1986, 1989/90,
 1990/91, 1991/92, 1992/93,
 1993/94, 1994/95, 1995/96,
 1996/97 and 1997/98
GAMES RECORD:
 Serg Melta (445)

GOALS RECORD:

Damian Mori (91)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Damian Mori (31) in 1995/96

RECORD WIN:

10-3 v Mooroolbark
 (League) in 1977

RECORD DEFEAT:

0-6 v
 St George (League) in 1988

Club Contacts

a	Work Tel.	Mobile
V/Pres. Charlie Capogreco	08 8336 9077	
Secretary Tony Antenucci	08 8336 9077	
Gen. Mgr. Vince Cosmai	08 8336 9077	
Development Alex Tobin	08 8336 9077	
Marketing Kaye Dobrilla	08 8336 9077	
Media Off. Max Huffa	08 8336 9077	
Man/Coach Zoran Matic	08 8346 1055	

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Adelaide Sharks



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: blue & white/blue/blue

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/red

Strip supplier: N/A

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major Sponsor: N/A

Other Sponsors: N/A

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Andrew Stathopoulos

Work: 08 8351 9866

Mobile: 0412 319 694

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Ilias Tsakikis

Telephone: (08)8351-9866

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Hindmarsh Stadium

Address: Holden Street, Hindmarsh

Telephone: (08)8346-1055

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 8,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car Parking: Holden Street (50 spots), Manton Street (150 spots)

Nearest Train Station: Bowden Railway Station, 10 minute walk from stadium

Train Station telephone: (08)8217-4111

Nearest taxi rank: Milner Street, Hindmarsh

Taxi telephone: (08)8211-8888

Nearest Bus Stop: Manton Street (outside stadium).

Buses telephone: (08)8287-4777

MEDIA

Media box: 16 seats

General media seating: 16 seats

Phone lines: 6 lines.

Contact (08)8340-0688

Radio Commentary boxes: 1

Television Commentary boxes: 1

Car Parking: Yes, arranged on match day

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$8 - \$12

Team Line-Up

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Children: \$2 - \$5 (2-12yo)

Concession: \$8 - \$11

CLUB SHOP

Address: Hindmarsh Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (08)8346-1055



WE'LL GO OVER THE TOP TO GIVE YOU



LMCT7792



Player Profile - John Gibson

Born: 10-2-1970 in Sydney, NSW **Height:** 1.74m **Weight:** 70kg
Signed From: Adelaide City **Position:** Midfielder
Representative Honours: NSW, Australia Schoolboys, U-20s, U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1994/95 - 97/98	Adelaide City	101	8
1992/93 - 93/94	Sydney United	53	11
1991/92	Apia Leichhardt	23	8
1990/91	Sydney United	22	3
1989 - 89/90	Blacktown City	75	14

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO John Gibson? A few years ago he was being likened to 1986 World Cup winner Martin Peters.

Fittingly, it was Gibson's Sydney United coach, Manfred Schaefer, who made the comparison.

Peters - a goalscoring midfielder for West Ham, Tottenham, Norwich City and England - used to arrive late in the penalty box and score a vital goal or two. During the 1992/93 season, Gibson was earning plenty of plaudits due to his late runs and midfield goals. It was then that Schaefer made his Gibson-is-Martin Peters comment.

Schaefer and Gibson are back working together for the third time. Schaefer, the Sharks' new boss, also coached Gibson at Apia Leichhardt.

The former Marconi Fairfield mentor wants Gibson to create and score goals. "Manfred did ask me before I signed with Adelaide Sharks if I had forgotten how to score goals," says the son of South African parents. Chad, his younger brother, is with Marconi.

"I was becoming disgruntled at Adelaide

City and even though I've got no regrets with what I have done in my career, I would like to put myself back on the map." Expect to see a free-spirited Gibson, who had brief trials at English sides QPR and Tottenham in the mid-80s, in a more attacking role.

The Sharks' 19th season in the National Soccer League sees Gibson citing a top-six spot, adding: "Talk is cheap but we are quietly confident and Manfred has got the players in top condition." The Australian soccer stalwart is just 26 games away from playing his 300th in the Ericsson Cup. An achievement, barring injury, he should complete towards the end of the 1998/99 campaign.

Only 28, the diminutive midfielder could, in four or five seasons, pass the all-time Ericsson Cup record of games played. Serg Melita holds the record with 445 NSL appearances.

Championship Tip:

Adelaide Sharks

Star Player Tip:

Hamilton Thorp

Club History

LAST YEAR: 10th YEARS IN NSL:

19th - 1977 to 1986,
1989/90, 1991/92 to
1998/99

HONOURS:

Champions - 1978
Cup runners up - 1981
and 1986

Finalists - 1978,
1992/93 and 1995/96

GAMES RECORD:

Graham Honeyman
(239)

GOALS RECORD:

Graham Honeyman (36)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Jim Tsekini (15) in

1995/96

RECORD WIN:

7-0 v Sunshine G.Cross
(League) in 1984

RECORD DEFEAT:

0-7 v Sydney City
(League) in 1980 and v
Wollongong City (League)
in 1989/90

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
President John Garas	08 8276 1517	
Secretary Andrew Stathopoulos	08 8351 9866	
Admin. Mgr. Peter Korolis	08 8351 9866	
Develop. Richie Alagich	08 8340 9688	
Media Off. Andrew Stathopoulos	08 8351 9866	
Man/Coach Manfred Schaefer	08 8351 9866	

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Brisbane Strikers



CLUB COLOURS

Home: shirt/shorts/socks: Yellow/royal blue/yellow

Away: shirt/shorts/socks: Green/green/white

Strip supplier: Uhlsport

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Hyundai

Other sponsors: Castlemaine Perkins, Coca-Cola, Clem Jones Group, ABC Printing

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Morris McGiffin

Mobile: 0411 152 520

Work: (07)3252-5327

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Suncorp Stadium

Address: Castlemaine Street, Milton

Telephone: (07)3876-6511

Capacity: 40,000

Seating Capacity: 25,500

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 240 spaces, cost \$5

Nearest train station: Milton Station, 5 minute walk from stadium

Nearest taxi rank: Castlemaine Street

Taxi telephone: (07)13-1924

Nearest bus stop: Castlemaine Street (outside stadium).

MEDIA

Media box: 15 seats

General media seating: 26 seats

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (07)7826-6511

Radio Commentary boxes: 7

Television Commentary Boxes: 2

Car parking: 3 spaces

Team Line-Up

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ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12

Children: \$4 (U-16)

Concession: \$6

Family: \$25

Junior Striker: \$2



HYUNDAI



HYUNDAI



HYUNDAI



HYUNDAI



Player Profile - Kasey Wehrman

Born: 16-8-1977 in Cloncurry, Queensland **Height:** 1.80m
Weight: 75kg **Signed From:** Ipswich Knights
Position: Right Midfield **Representative Honours:** QLD, Australia U-20s, U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Strikers	29	4

MIDDLESBROUGH WAS WAITING to take him to England for a trial and the Young Socceroos were ready to participate in the 1997 World Youth Championship in Malaysia. Ericsson Cup's 1996/97 Under-21 Player of the Year was on the verge of making the big time.

Then, in the Young Socceroos' final friendly game, Brisbane Strikers' Kasey Wehrman broke his ankle.

Sixteen months later Wehrman is back playing for Australia and predicting a Strikers revival.

The ankle still requires physiotherapy four times a day but gone are the screws and the anguish of a cast that he was forced to wear for eight weeks.

"The injury was my first major drawback and even now I do not know when it will be 100 per cent right," Wehrman says.

His lengthy spell on the sidelines injured, however, were not filled with doubt about him continuing his soccer career.

"I was always confident that I would play again for Brisbane and the Olyroos.

It was not a possibility that I would not get back in the team. All I want to do is help restore pride in the Brisbane jersey and remain in the Olyroo squad."

At Suncorp Stadium this season, the

Strikers will be guided by John Kosmina, who follows in the footsteps of another Australian striker, Frank Farina, as the team boss.

"Maybe Frank took Brisbane as far as he could. Kosmina's like Frank. He knows when to draw the line. If you're not performing it doesn't matter if you are 13 or 31 - he will drop you."

The skilful Wehrman likes nothing better than to take on two or three players, but last August's South American tour with the Olyroos taught the right-sided playmaker a thing or two about professional football.

"I learnt to concentrate a lot more during the game and not to give the ball away. Holding onto the ball, even under pressure, is a trademark of the South American game."

Kasey is fully aware that Suncorp Stadium must become a fortress, a place where teams fear coming to.

"We must play with more heart this season."

Championship Tip:

Brisbane Strikers

Star Player Tip:

Paul Trimboli

Club History

LAST YEAR 12th

YEARS IN NSL

8th - 1991/92 to 1998/99

HONOURS

Champions - 1996/97
 Finalists - 1995/96 and 1996/97

GAMES RECORD

Troy Cranney (152)

GOALS RECORD

Rod Brown (41)

REC GLS IN SEAS

Frank Farina (20) in 1995/96

RECORD WIN

7-1 v Adelaide City (League) in 1995/96

RECORD DEFEAT

0-7 v Adelaide City (League) in 1995/96

Club Contacts

Work Tel. Mobile

Chairman Ian Brusasco, AM 07 3252 5327

Director Frank Speare 07 3252 5327

Gen. Mgr. Ray Evans 07 3252 5327

Develop. Andrew Harper 07 3252 5327

Mktg. Derryn Humphries 07 3252 5327

Media Off. Morris McGiffin 07 3252 5327

Man/Coach John Kosmina 07 3252 5327



HYUNDAI



HYUNDAI

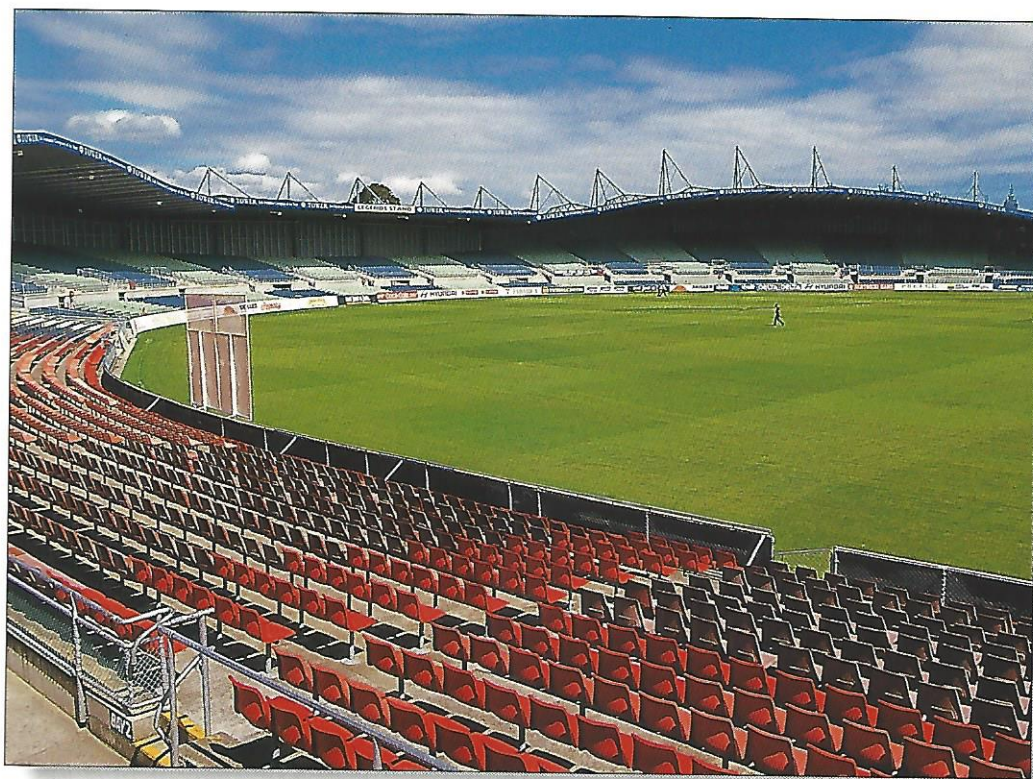


HYUNDAI

Hyundai proudly sponsors the Brisbane Strikers



Carlton S.C.



CLUB COLOURS

Home: shirt/shorts/socks: Navy blue/white/navy blue

Away: shirt/shorts/socks: white/navy blue/white

Strip supplier: Nike

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major Sponsor: Parmalat

Other Sponsors: Coffex, Nike

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Jerome Lyford

Mobile: 0418 328 880

Work: (03)9389-6213

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Sam Prenesti

Telephone: (03)9642-3966

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Optus Oval

Address: Royal Parade, Parkville

Telephone: (03)9387-1400

Capacity: 20,000

Seating Capacity: 20,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car Parking: 2,000 spaces, cost \$4

Nearest Train Station: Royal Park, 4 minutes walk from stadium

Nearest Tram Station: Tram No.18/19/20 (outside stadium)

Nearest Taxi Rank: Sydney Road, Parkville
Taxi telephone: (03)13-1008

Nearest Bus Stop: Royal Parade (outside stadium).

MEDIA

Media box: Yes, 30 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (03)9387-1400.

Radio Commentary boxes: 6

Television Commentary boxes: 3

Car Parking: Yes (as per public)

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$14

Team Line-Up

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Children: \$6 (8-16yo)

Concession: \$6

CLUB SHOP

Address: Optus Oval

Opening Hours: Mon-Fri 11am - 5pm

Telephone: (03)9389-6288

Don't pay the penalties!



Player Profile - Vince Grella

Born: 5-10-1979 in Dandenong **Height:** 1.83m **Weight:** 76kg
Signed From: Canberra Cosmos **Position:** Central midfielder
Representative Honours: VIC, Australia U-20s, U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1997/98	Carlton SC	22	1
1996/97	Canberra Cosmos	14	1

THEY MAY HAVE missed out on lucrative soccer careers but Pasquale and David Grella should not underestimate the influence they have had on Australia's latest wonderkid.

Vince Grella - a key member of the Young Socceroo and Olyroo teams - is thankful his two older brothers have guided him clear of the murky waters that threaten a young star's pursuit of full-time football.

"They both warned me," confesses the 19-year-old midfielder.

"If the advice had come from someone else then I wouldn't have listened - they showed me the way. It was the little things they said that made the difference.

"Pasquale was a good player but he fractured his patella and put on 10kg and became a bit of a party boy."

Watching his brothers miss the boat has made Vince - christened Vincenzo by his Italian-born parents - determined to grab every chance that came his way.

During a patchy 97/98 campaign - a knee injury kept him out of Carlton's Grand Final loss to South Melbourne - saw the ex-Canberra midfielder play in various roles for debut coach Eddie Krncevic.

"I couldn't say anything to Eddie because I had no runs on the board."

Grella could form a formidable partnership with new Carlton signing Andrew Marth. The ex-Melbourne Knights hardman is a two-time Ericsson Cup champion and a former Socceroo.

Many argue that top-flight Australian selection should come sooner rather than later and would prove to be the final litmus test for a player who has a collection of overseas clubs monitoring his form.

Watching Grella play you get the impression that he's styled his game on Brazilian World Cup skipper Dunga.

"I am comfortable in the middle of the park. I like the midfield anchor role."

A wise head on young shoulders?

"I am a good listener and I watch a lot of football - I learn from others' mistakes. That's one of my strengths."

So what would Grella, who has had the fortune to learn from his brothers' mistakes, offer young players seeking his advice?

"Enjoy what you do and be patient."

Championship Tip:

Sydney Olympic

Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

Club History

PAST YEAR:

and
YEARS IN NSL:

nd - 1997/98 to
 998/99

HONOURS:

runners up - 1997/98
 finalists - 1997/98

GAMES RECORD:

Dean Anastasiadis and
 Andy Vlahos (30)

GOALS RECORD:

Andy Vlahos (13)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Andy Vlahos (13) in
 1997/98

RECORD WIN:

5-0 v South Melbourne
 (League) in 1997/98

RECORD DEFEAT:

1-3 v Wollongong City
 (League) in 1997/98

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman Jack Reilly	03 9389 6213	
Secretary Lou Sticca	03 9389 6213	
Gen. Mgr. Lou Sticca	03 9389 6213	
Mktg. Jerome Lyford	03 9389 6213	
Develop. Off. Jeff Olver	03 9389 6213	
Media Off. Angelo Sticca	03 9389 6213	
Man/Coach Eddie Krncevic	03 9389 6213	

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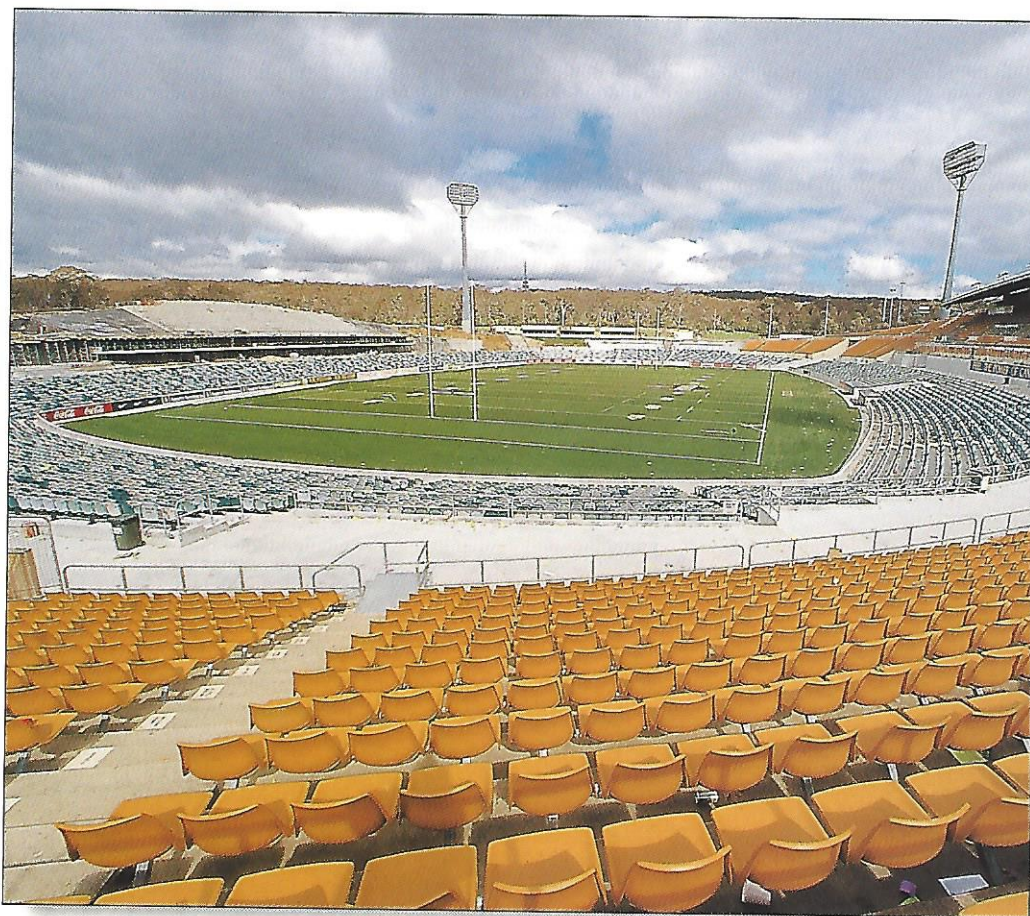
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Canberra Cosmos



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/red

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Yellow/blue/blue

Strip supplier: Admiral

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Novell

Other sponsors: Total Care

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

contact club

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Peter Kunz

Telephone: (02)6209-3066

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Bruce Stadium

Address: Batty Street, Canberra

Telephone: (02)6253-2111

Capacity: under renovations, contact club

Seating Capacity: under renovations,

contact club

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: adjacent to stadium

Nearest taxi rank: outside stadium

Taxi telephone: 13-2227

Nearest bus stop: outside stadium

Buses telephone: (02)6203-3600

MEDIA

Media box: contact club

General media seating: contact club

Phone lines: contact club

Radio Commentary boxes: contact club

Television Commentary Boxes: contact club

Car parking: contact club

ADMISSION PRICES (Subject to change)

Adult: \$10

Team Line-Up

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Children: \$2 (Under-12)

Concession: \$5

CLUB SHOP

Address: Bruce Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02)6281-7981

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Player Profile - Ivan Zelic

Born: 12-2-1978 in Canberra **Height:** 1.91m **Weight:** 88kg
Signed From: Sydney Olympic **Position:** Central Midfield
Representative Honours: Australia U-20s, U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1997/98	Canberra Cosmos	15	2
1995/96 - 96/97	Sydney Olympic	23	-

COACHES RON SMITH, David Ratcliffe, David Mitchell, Branko Culina, Rale Rasic, Les Scheinflug and Raul Blanco all have one thing in common: They have all coached Ivan Zelic.

Zelic praised them all but then focused on Smith, soccer's former head coach at the Australian Institute of Sport.

"He's the best ever. Any position he could rant and rave about. He could talk underwater."

Veteran Cosmos coach Rasic also gets the thumbs-up from Zelic, who says:

"He's the main reason I am still at Canberra."

Zelic's versatility - he appears for the Olyroos as a defender and then slots into the central midfield role for the nation's capital team - has given Zelic a new lease of life.

An injury-plagued career has made the 1998/99 Ericsson Cup season a "make or break" campaign for the Canberra skipper.

"People have not seen the best of me...or Canberra."

"I have been preaching the Cosmos bible to a lot of the Olyroo players this year. I am quietly confident we will cause some upsets this season."

He admits that as a 17-year-old making

his Ericsson Cup debut for Sydney Olympic he was overawed. Expectations because of his surname didn't help. Then three confidence-crushing injuries all caused by team-mates.

"My expectations this season are high. Playing for Canberra will be a challenge and I have set myself a target of being the best player in the league. I want to see how far I can push myself."

He's just as confident about the support Canberra can obtain if they can win games on a regular basis.

"If we could get in the top five, I'll guarantee you 12,000 fans would turn out and watch us play at home. Canberra people only watch winning teams."

Zelic rates Paul Trimboli as his most difficult opponent and is amazed when I do not mention Ned, his famous globetrotting Socceroo brother, now in Germany with 1860 Munich.

"By the way, thanks for not mentioning my brother," Ivan says at the end of the interview.

Has Ivan finally escaped his brother's shadow?

Championship Tip:

South Melbourne

Star Player Tip:

Simon Colosimo

Club History

ST YEAR:

th

ARS IN NSL:

- 1995/96 to

98/99

OURS:

GAMES RECORD:

Paul Dee (73)

GOALS RECORD:

Paul Wade and Peter Buljan (12)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Paul Wade (11) in 1995/96

RECORD WIN:

8-1 v Sydney Olympic (League) in 1997/98

RECORD DEFEAT:

0-8 v Wollongong City (League) in 1997/98

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman		
Ian Knop	02 9258 2393	
Deputy Chairman		
Steve Doszpot	02 6282 8777	
Gen. Manager		
Denis Glavinic	02 6281 7981	
Man/Coach		
Rale Rasic	02 6281 7981	

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Gippsland Falcons



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Royal blue/royal blue/white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/white

Strip supplier: Covo Sports

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: Mobil GPG,
Ten Victoria, 3GG

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Damian Tripodi

Mobile: 019 423 115

After Hours: (03)5174-8742

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: c/- Gippsland Falcons

Telephone: (03)5134-5529

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Falcons Park

Address: Crinigan Road, Morwell

Telephone: (03)5134-5529

Capacity: 12,000

Seating Capacity: 8,500

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,000 spaces at no cost

Nearest train station: Morwell Railway

Station, 30 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (03)5133-7555

Nearest taxi rank: Morwell CBD

Taxi telephone: (03)5134-4772

Nearest bus stop: Crinigan Road (outside stadium).

Buses telephone: (03)5134-2055

MEDIA

Media box: 12 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (03)5134-5529

Radio Commentary boxes: 1

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$10

Team Line-Up

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Children: \$3 (5-16yo)

Concession: \$6

CLUB SHOP

Address: Falcons Park

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (03)5134-5529



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- dual layer low tac PU surface with low water absorption
- maximum resilience for high power and accurate shooting
- exclusive matchball of The FA Premier League, Team England, The Football Association, Scotland, The Nationwide Football League, The Scottish Football League, The Football Association of Wales, The Irish Football League and many top International teams and clubs



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Player Profile - Archie Thompson

Born: 23-10-1978 in New Zealand **Height:** 1.71m **Weight:** 68kg
Signed From: Bathurst **Position:** Midfield/forward
Representative Honours: Australia U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1996/97	Gippsland Falcons	29	6

ARCHIE THOMPSON IS anything but your average soccer player. International recognition happened so quickly that journalists were left fumbling for his phone number when he was first selected for the Australian Under-23 side last year.

"I didn't think I would be playing at this level," states Thompson.

Soccer pundits will point to one-time Falcons boss Frank Arok and Raul Blanco as the two coaches responsible for the attacking midfielder's path to soccer fame.

Arok gave Thompson his Ericsson Cup profile and Olyroo coach Blanco immediately spotted his international potential after a handful of games in Australia's premier soccer competition.

However, the New Zealand-born Australian is desperate for first-team football at Gippsland.

New coach and former Sydney United defender Stuart Munro has promised the talented goal-getter a place in the first team.

The well-travelled 35-year-old Munro, a Glasgow Rangers player for eight successful years, wants a fired-up Thompson. The Falcons scored a paltry 28 goals last season.

"I just want a fair run," says Thompson.

"In the last two years I have had limited opportunities. I want to score more goals and you can't always do that by coming on as a substitute. I feel I should have been given more opportunities. Stuart Munro has told me I will be a regular."

The pacy Thompson, who likes to slot in behind the front two strikers, is aware that parts of his game need working on.

A fan of the Diego Maradona dribbling school, the ex-Twin City Wanderers right-footer has been told to play more "one-touch" football by Blanco.

Munro has issued a "track back" clause in Thompson's demands for a first-team spot.

"I am not used to defending but that's a part of the game I must learn," he says.

The well-liked Gippsland-based soon-to-be 20-year-old was linked to a number of Ericsson Cup teams in the off-season. Staying was an easy option for the bleached-blond Olyroo star.

"There's more high-profile clubs but the Falcon supporters have been encouraging me for the last two years and I owe them a bit of loyalty."

Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

Club History

LAST YEAR: 11th
YEARS IN NSL:
 1st - 1992/93 to
 1998/99
HONOURS:
 Nationalists - 1994/95
AMES RECORD:
 audio Canosa (113)

GOALS RECORD:

John Markovski (20)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

John Markovski (11) in
 1993/94

RECORD WIN:

5-1 v Brisbane (League)
 in 1994/95 and

v Newcastle Breakers in
 1997/98

RECORD DEFEAT:

0- 5 v Canberra Cosmos
 (League) in 1995/96
 and v Adelaide City
 (League) in 1995/96

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
President Fred Di Sipio	03 5134 5529	
Secretary Paul Burns	03 5177 2020	
Gen. Mgr. Mark Brady	03 5134 5529	
Exc.Assist. Lynnette Mullen	03 5134 5529	
Sponsorship Mike Answerth	03 5134 5529	
Media Off. Damien Tripodi	03 5174 7355	
Man/Coach Stuart Munro	03 5134 5529	

Monde

- IMS competition matchball
- high resilience with lively performance and light feel
- excellent for ladies and junior matches
- high gloss surface with soft feel
- balanced backing system for shape & flight control



Ultima

- exclusive replica & practice quality ball
- PU coated high gloss synthetic material with "matchball" feel
- 4 ply polyester/ cotton backing for strength & performance
- mid rebound replica with real ball performance



Cosmic

- training & junior matchball quality
- tough and durable synthetic surface with "matchball" feel
- 4 ply polyester/ cotton backing for strength & performance
- suitable for natural



Marconi Fairfield



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Sky blue/sky blue/white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: White/white/green

Strip supplier: Asics

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Brescia Furniture

Other sponsors: 2WS

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Ross Musso

Mobile: 0411 624 242

Work: (02)9823-2222

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Frank Arruzza

Telephone: (02)9823-2222

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Marconi Stadium

Address: Marconi Plaza, Bossley Park

Telephone: (02)9823-7209

Capacity: 12,500

Seating Capacity: 6,032

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 2,500 spaces at no cost

Nearest train station: Fairfield Station
(transport required to/from station)

Nearest taxi rank: Club Marconi

Taxi telephone: (02)13-1017 or
(02)13-2788

Nearest bus stop: Prairievale Road

Buses telephone: (02)9890-0000

MEDIA

Media box: 15 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact
(02)9823-2222

Radio Commentary boxes: 2

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12

Children: \$3.50 (12-16yo)

Concession: \$7.50

Team Line-Up

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CLUB SHOP

Address: Club Marconi

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 1pm - 10pm,
Sat/Sun 3pm - 12am

Telephone: (02)9823-2222



BRESCIA
FURNITURE

PROUD
SPONSOR OF





Player Profile - Dominic Longo

Born: 23-8-1970 in Hobart **Height:** 1.84m **Weight:** 84kg
Signed From: KSV Cercle Brugge (Belgium) **Position:** Defender
Representative Honours: NSW, Australia U-17s, U-20s, U-23s, Senior Team

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Marconi Fairfield	64	2
1991/92	Newcastle Breakers	20	-
1990/91	St George	12	1
1989/90	Blacktown City	14	1

DOMINIC LONGO IS not as big as he should be. Going through the edited highlights of Australia's greatest soccer accomplishments in the last six years, Longo's name is best remembered as one of the Barcelona heroes during the Olyroos' fourth placing at the 1992 Olympic Games.

After the Games, Longo, then 21, headed for Belgium and Cercle Brugge. His career was ready to take off. Or so it seemed.

Six years later, with a handful of Australian "A" caps to his name and a place in the Marconi first team, 28-year-old Longo says he has "no regrets".

The affable defender is not bitter about his Soccerroo exile and his overseas departure.

"Different coaches have different ideas. But after the '92 Olympics I did think I would get a better run (in the Soccerroo team)."

Now, the part-time university student is pumped up for Marconi's bid for a championship trophy. Longo talks effusively about Frank Farina, Marconi's ex-striker and one-time Soccerroo star.

"You've got to be a million things to be a modern coach, that's why he's going to be good," says Longo.

"Frank's got a lot of ideas, different methods and he knows there is always another way to make players train - he's smart."

Something tells you that the Tasmanian-born Marconi star will not be a soccer journeyman, tying his boot laces in his late 30s and then joining the coaching ranks.

"I'd like to play for another five-years. A player knows when his used-by-date is up," says Longo.

The hard man image is not something Longo feels is justified. The 1996/97 season saw Longo notch seven yellow and two red cards. Last season he improved, suspended for just two matches.

"Nowadays you can't go over the top like you could 10 years ago and get away with it. I hope I'm respected for being a hard player and a fair one."

Championship Tip:

Marconi Fairfield

Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

Club History

LAST YEAR: 3rd
YEARS IN NSL:
 23rd - 1977 to 1998/99
HONOURS:
 Champions - 1979, 1988, 1989
 and 1992/93
 Runners up - 1977, 1989/90
 and 1995/96
 Runners up (North Div) - 1985
 Minor premiers - 1989, 1989/90
 and 1995/96

Cup winners - 1980
 Cup runners up - 1977, 1991/92
 and 1996/97
 Top 4 Cup runners up - 1978
 Finalists - 1978, 1979, 1980,
 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988,
 1989, 1989/90, 1990/91,
 1992/93, 1993/94, 1995/96,
 1996/97 and 1997/98
GAMES RECORD:
 Tommy McCulloch (246)

GOALS RECORD:

Mark Jankovic (95)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Zlatko Nastevski (20)
 in 1989

RECORD WIN:

9-0 v Blacktown (League)
 in 1980

RECORD DEFEAT:

0-6 v Melbourne Knights
 (League) in 1990/91

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman Frank Baroni	02 9823 2222	
President Tony Labbozzetta	02 9823 2222	
Gen. Mgr. Frank Labbozzetta	02 9823 2222	
Mktg. Ross Musso	02 9823 2222	
Admin. Gabriella Genovese	02 9823 2222	
Develop. Brendan Renaud	02 9823 2222	
Media Off. Ross Musso	02 9823 2222	
Man/Coach Frank Farina	02 9823 2222	



BRESCIA
 FURNITURE

PROUD
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Melbourne Knights



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/white/blue

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Gold/gold/gold

Strip supplier: Covo Sports

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Prime Life Corporation

Other sponsors: CSR, JZ Lee, Tooheys,

Pacific Textiles, Covo Sports

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Peter Brettell

Mobile: 0418 339 836

Work: (03)9699-4188

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Tom Babic

Telephone: (03)9312-3584

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Knights Stadium

Address: Lot 2, Somers St, North Sunshine

Telephone: (03)9312-3584

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 4,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,200 spaces, cost \$3

Nearest train station: Sunshine and Ginifer Stations

Train station telephone: (03)9619-5405/(03)9610-8567

Nearest taxi rank: at above train stations

Taxi telephone: (03)9689-1194

Nearest bus stop: Northumberland Road, McIntyre Road

Buses telephone: (03)9311-3407

MEDIA

Media box: Yes, 10 seats

General media seating: Yes, as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact 0418 381 626.

Radio Commentary boxes: 2

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12 Children: \$3 (12-16yo),

Team Line-Up

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Under-12 free Concession: \$6

CLUB SHOP

Address: Knights Stadium

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5pm and match days

Telephone: (03)9312-3584

Australia's most successful team of the 90's are proudly supported by:
Primelife Corporation, Toohey's, CSR, Emoleum, Indospray, JZ Lee, Pacific Textiles, Covo Sports

Raceplay the sporting company leaders in: Public Relations Marketing



Player Profile - Zeljko Susa

Born: 13-7-1978 in Canberra **Height:** 1.86m **Weight:** 85kg
Signed From: Australian Institute of Sport **Position:** Left midfield
Representative Honours: ACT, Australia U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1997/98	Melbourne Knights	17	2

WHO CAN FORGIVE Melbourne Knights' Zeljko Susa for having a phobia about changing rooms?

Before he was a well-known Australian international, Susa was having a trial with Ericsson Cup side Wollongong Wolves. In the changing rooms after the match, the Olyroo ace was getting changed when, literally, his world caved in around him.

Somehow the walls fell apart and the debris landed on the then-teenager. It was only days later that he was forced to undergo a total knee reconstruction.

The ex-Australian Institute of Sport graduate was out for 12 long months. "It only makes me more determined to achieve success."

The left-sided midfielder, now 20, lists participation at the 2000 Olympic Games with Raul Blanco's Olyroos as his ambition during the next two-years.

"Raul has told me to go forward...and aim for 10 to 12 goals this season," the young Knights star adds firmly: "I've got to push forward more."

Susa predicts a top-four spot for his club.

"Last season we had a lot of youth players in the first-team. The buzz

around Melbourne Knights now is because those youngsters have the talent to make an impression in the league."

Susa, a keen fisherman, has also cast his eye on an overseas career. "I like the look of the German League. They play to my style: ball at the feet...taking on players."

Asked when he would like to hit the professional ranks, he says: "It depends how this season goes."

Zeljko is determined not to let peer pressure get in the way of a promising year for the Knights and Australia. A party boy image is not a tag that will sit comfortably with the exciting wideman.

"It's hard at first to say no (to going out and having a few drinks) but you realise it's worth staying in and preparing for the next game."

Collapsing walls have enabled Susa to have a pragmatic outlook on the game: "It's scary how quickly things can change."

Championship Tip:

Melbourne Knights

Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

Club History

HIGHEST YEAR: 7th

YEARS IN NSL:

6th - 1984 to 1998/99

HONOURS:

Champions - 1994/95 and 1995/96

Runners up - 1990/91,

1991/92 and 1993/94

Minor premiers - 1990/91,

1991/92, 1993/94 and

1994/95

Cup winners - 1994/95

Cup runners up - 1984

Finalists - 1984, 1985,

1989, 1989/90, 1990/91,

1991/92, 1993/94,

1994/95, 1995/96 and

1996/97

GAMES RECORD:

Josip Biskic (282)

GOALS RECORD:

Ivan Kelic (55)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Mark Viduka (18) in 1994/95

RECORD WIN:

8-1 v Wollongong Mac

(League) in 1990/91

RECORD DEFEAT:

0-6 v Adelaide City (League)

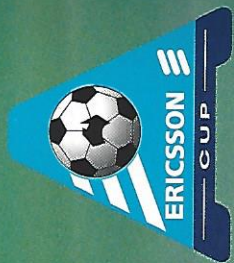
in 1990/91

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman		
David Galbally QC	03 9608 7222	
Gen. Manager		
Tania De Marchi	03 9312 3584	
Marketing		
Peter Brettell	03 9699 4188	
Media Off.		
Peter Brettell	03 9699 4188	
Man/Coach		
Vid Horvat	03 9312 3584	

Player Management are proud to be associated with the Melbourne Knights.

Contact: Account Executive
 Peter Brettell (03) 9699 4188



1998/1999

Ericsson Cup Fixture

1998/1999 Ericsson Cup Fixture

1998/99 DRAW	Adelaide City	Adelaide Sharks	Brisbane Strikers	Canberra Cosmos	Carlton SC	Gippsland Falcons	Marconi Fairfield	Melbourne Knights	Newcastle Breakers	Northern Spirit	Perth Glory	South Melbourne	Sydney Olympic	Sydney United	Wollongong Wolves	Bye
Adelaide City		Rd 27	Rd 7	Rd 9	Rd 2	Rd 11	Rd 29	Rd 20	Rd 13	Rd 23	Rd 16	Rd 25	Rd 15	Rd 19	Rd 4	Rd 5
Adelaide Sharks	Rd 12		Rd 14	Rd 1	Rd 18	Rd 3	Rd 6	Rd 10	Rd 22	Rd 28	Rd 8	Rd 17	Rd 24	Rd 30	Rd 26	Rd 21
Brisbane Strikers	Rd 24	Rd 29		Rd 11	Rd 21	Rd 13	Rd 16	Rd 5	Rd 15	Rd 8	Rd 20	Rd 27	Rd 2	Rd 25	Rd 6	Rd 9
Canberra Cosmos	Rd 18	Rd 16	Rd 26		Rd 6	Rd 15	Rd 20	Rd 24	Rd 2	Rd 25	Rd 22	Rd 29	Rd 4	Rd 12	Rd 8	Rd 13
Carlton SC	Rd 17	Rd 9	Rd 4	Rd 23		Rd 19	Rd 11	Rd 30	Rd 25	Rd 20	Rd 13	Rd 7	Rd 27	Rd 5	Rd 16	Rd 29
Gippsland Falcons	Rd 26	Rd 20	Rd 28	Rd 30	Rd 8		Rd 22	Rd 18	Rd 4	Rd 12	Rd 24	Rd 1	Rd 6	Rd 14	Rd 10	Rd 17
Marconi Fairfield	Rd 14	Rd 23	Rd 1	Rd 3	Rd 26	Rd 5		Rd 12	Rd 7	Rd 15	Rd 10	Rd 21	Rd 18	Rd 17	Rd 28	Rd 19
Melbourne Knights	Rd 3	Rd 25	Rd 22	Rd 7	Rd 15	Rd 9	Rd 27		Rd 11	Rd 4	Rd 29	Rd 19	Rd 13	Rd 23	Rd 17	Rd 1
Newcastle Breakers	Rd 28	Rd 5	Rd 30	Rd 17	Rd 10	Rd 21	Rd 24	Rd 26		Rd 14	Rd 18	Rd 3	Rd 8	Rd 1	Rd 12	Rd 23
Northern Spirit	Rd 6	Rd 13	Rd 19	Rd 10	Rd 3	Rd 27	Rd 30	Rd 21	Rd 29		Rd 2	Rd 11	Rd 16	Rd 9	Rd 22	Rd 7
Perth Glory	Rd 1	Rd 19	Rd 3	Rd 5	Rd 28	Rd 7	Rd 25	Rd 14	Rd 9	Rd 17		Rd 23	Rd 11	Rd 21	Rd 30	Rd 27
South Melbourne	Rd 10	Rd 2	Rd 12	Rd 14	Rd 24	Rd 16	Rd 4	Rd 8	Rd 20	Rd 26	Rd 6		Rd 22	Rd 28	Rd 18	Rd 30
Sydney Olympic	Rd 30	Rd 7	Rd 17	Rd 21	Rd 12	Rd 23	Rd 9	Rd 28	Rd 19	Rd 1	Rd 26	Rd 5		Rd 3	Rd 14	Rd 25
Sydney United	Rd 8	Rd 15	Rd 10	Rd 27	Rd 22	Rd 29	Rd 2	Rd 6	Rd 16	Rd 18	Rd 4	Rd 13	Rd 20		Rd 24	Rd 11
Wollongong Wolves	Rd 21	Rd 11	Rd 23	Rd 19	Rd 1	Rd 25	Rd 13	Rd 2	Rd 27	Rd 5	Rd 15	Rd 9	Rd 29	Rd 7		Rd 3
Bye	Rd 22	Rd 4	Rd 18	Rd 28	Rd 14	Rd 2	Rd 8	Rd 16	Rd 6	Rd 24	Rd 12	Rd 15	Rd 10	Rd 26	Rd 20	

*read down for home teams, across for away teams" ** season commences w/ending 12 October, 1998 and concludes w/ending 25 April, 1999"

FOR WEEKLY FIXTURE DATES CALL THE ERICSSON CUP HOT-LINE ON 1900 123 035



Newcastle Breakers



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Blue/blue/blue

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Yellow/purple/yellow

Strip supplier:

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: NBN Television

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Shane Johnson

Mobile: 0412 512 722

Work: (02)4951-2722

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Name: Greg Jones

Telephone: 0418 271 856

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Breakers Stadium

Address: 104 Sandgate Road,

Birmingham Gardens

Telephone: (02)4951-2722

Capacity: 11,000

Seating Capacity: 2,666

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 400 spaces, cost \$3

Nearest train station: Sandgate Station,
15 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)4962-9696

Nearest taxi rank: Nelson Street, Wallsend

Taxi telephone: (02)4979-3000

Nearest bus stop: England Street,

Birmingham Gardens

Buses telephone: (02)4961-8933

MEDIA

Media box: 10 seats

General media seating: 8 seats

Phone lines: One. Contact 0412 512 722

Radio Commentary boxes: 2

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: 12 spots

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12 - \$14

Children: \$6 (16-18yo)

Concession: \$6

Team Line-Up

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Grandstand: add \$2

CLUB SHOP

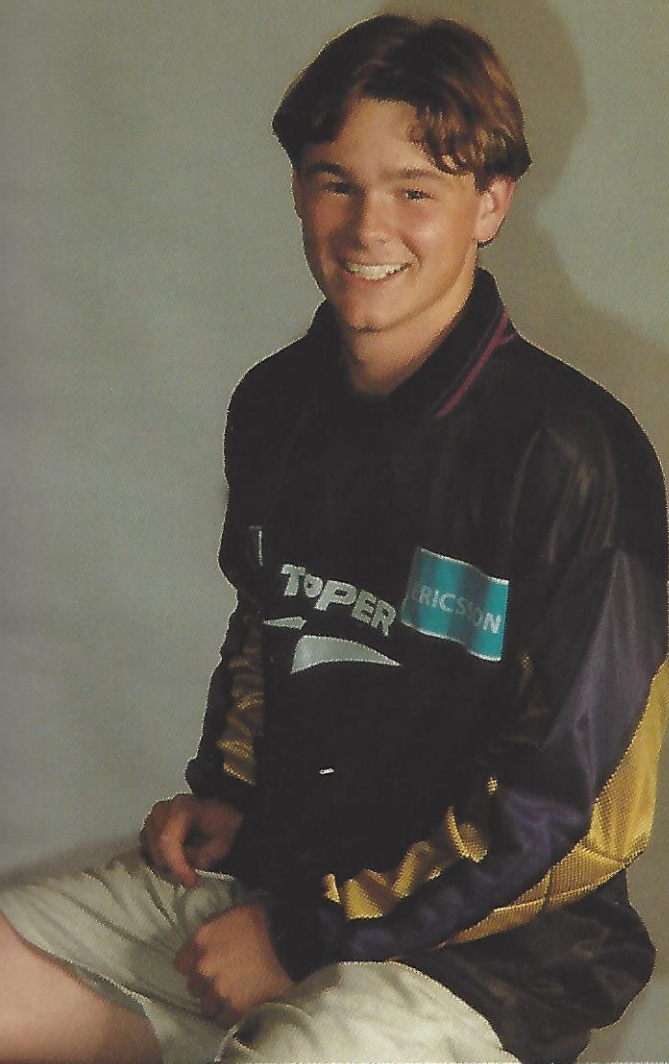
Address: Breakers Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02) 4951 2722

Last Season
The FA Premier League
Enjoyed a Weekly Television
Audience of 450 Million.

.....Why....?



Player Profile - Bradley Swancott

Born: 23-7-1979 in Newcastle, NSW **Height:** 1.80m **Weight:** 70kg
Signed From: Juniors **Position:** Goalkeeper
Representative Honours: NNSW, Australia U-20s, U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1996/97 - 97/98	Newcastle Breakers	20	-

WHEN ASKED WHY he chose a life between the sticks, Newcastle's only international figure leaves you doubting nothing.

He may have played a limited number of games in the Ericsson Cup but Bradley Kaveny Swancott, or 'Swanie' to his team-mates, has plenty of confidence.

Says Bradley: "I would rather be pointing the finger than chasing other players around the park.

"I suppose I am confident for my age but a goalie has to be vocal."

The easy-to-quote Newcastle-born custodian learnt early not to give away too much to the prying media. In only his second interview, Swancott was misquoted.

"It happened in the local papers. Something I said was taken out of proportion," Swancott adds: "You have to draw a line with the media. A lot of what goes on between the players is kept in the shed."

Introduced to Ericsson Cup soccer fans by former Breakers boss John Kosmina, Swancott has also had the bonus of having international coaching advice from veterans Les Scheinflug and Raul Blanco. Newcastle has now

employed the highly-rated Lee Sterrey. Vying for the number 1 jersey will be Bob Catlin. Their goalkeeping coach will be Steve Dorman, who trained Socceroo Zeljko Kalac at Sydney United.

With these changes, the 5,000 loyal supporters who go through the turnstiles at Breakers Stadium will be looking for a much-improved National Soccer League campaign. Can they recapture their past glories?

"We are still a young side and nine of the squad are locals. But that is a solid foundation.

"I know I've got to improve on all aspects of my game. Every time we lose a game that means I train twice as hard."

The shot-stopper talks of settling down and before I can put a question to him, claims: "I rarely go out and I am very focused - nothing gets in my way."

So is Swancott the clean-out, wholesome, eloquent young man he's trying to portray?

"If that's what you're going to write then I'm not going to stop you," Swanie laughs.

Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

Star Player Tip:

Vince Grella

Club History

LAST YEAR: 13th
YEARS IN NSL:
 7th - 1991/92 to
 1993/94 and 1995/96
 to 1998/99
HONOURS:
 Cup runners up -
 1995/96

GAMES RECORD:
 Ralph Maier (106)
GOALS RECORD:
 Warren Spink (29)
REC GLS IN SEAS:
 Warren Spink (16)
 in 1992/93

RECORD WIN:
 7-1 v Nth NSW Lions
 (Cup) in 1996/97
RECORD DEFEAT:
 0-6 v Melbourne Knights
 (League) in 1991/92

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman Bill Collins	02 4951 2722	
Gen. Mgr. Peter Clough	02 4951 2722	
Admin. Helen Delforce	02 4951 2722	
Develop. Lee Sterrey	02 4951 2722	
Mktg. Peter Clough	02 4951 2722	
Media Off. Shane Johnson	02 4951 2722	
Man/Coach Lee Sterrey	02 4951 2722	





CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: white/white/white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: blue/blue/blue

Strip supplier: Reusch

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: North Shore Furniture,

Scuderia Volvo, Goodyear, Reusch

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: David Mason

Work: (02)9959-3010

Mobile: 0418 243 195

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: c/- Northern Spirit

Telephone: (02)9460-2187

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: North Sydney Oval

Address: Miller Street, North Sydney

Telephone: (02)9936-8585

Capacity: 20,000

Seating Capacity: 5,570

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: Ridge Street, 150 space,
cost \$5

Nearest train station: North Sydney Station,
15 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)9379-4112

Nearest taxi rank: McLaren Street,
North Sydney

Taxi telephone: (02)13 2522

Nearest bus stop: Miller Street
(outside stadium)

Buses telephone: (02)13 1500

MEDIA

Media box: 2 boxes, 8 seats in each

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required.

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$10 - \$18

Children: \$5 - \$10 (12-16yo)

Team Line-Up

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Concession: nil

CLUB SHOP

Address: North Sydney Oval

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02)9460-2187



Player Profile - Robbie Slater

Born: 22-11-1964 in Ormskirk, England **Height:** 5' 11" **Weight:** 80kg **Signed From:** Wolverhampton (England) **Position:** Central Midfield **Representative Honours:** Australian Senior Team

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1987-89	Sydney United	73	17
1986	Blacktown	19	2
1982-85	St George	98	27

ROBBIE SLATER WANTS to be a coach. When the talented ex-Blackburn Rovers, West Ham United, Southampton and Wolverhampton Wanderers midfielder appeared on Foxtel's English Premiership program, he confessed to wanting to prolong his soccer career by becoming a manager of team affairs. Sitting in the Sydney Pay-TV studio with him was Slater's new boss, Graham Arnold. The possible success of Liverpool's joint managers, Gerard Houllier and Roy Evans, was the topic and Slater uttered: "If it does work out, it could be good for me - maybe I will be a coach with Arnie (Graham Arnold)." Arnold, as quick as a striker in the six-yard box, replied: "Don't go too far." Arnold and Slater return to the National Soccer League thanks to debut Ericsson Cup outfit Northern Spirit. The Sydney-based club is hoping to repeat the success of Perth Glory, which attracts 15,000-plus crowds on home soil. Team-mates in the late '80s at Sydney United and partners during some of the Socceroos' more glamorous attempts at World Cup qualification in the '90s, Arnold and Slater could become the new force in Australian soccer.

Stated Slater: "This is the only club I would have come back for and I suppose Arnie played a big part."

Arnold said: "Some of us have done well out of the game and if we can't put something back into the game, then that would be a great shame."

Slater adds: "In the future the younger players at Northern Spirit will be looked upon as pioneers for Australian soccer. The game needs professional players in Australia."

The squad assembled at Spirit needs little introduction. Packed with players who have already proved themselves at Ericsson Cup level; shaped by players who have done the business overseas. Slater, 33, is equally zealous about the set-up at Spirit. "It's like a European club - it's well run. All the players are looked after." Robbie Slater even talks like a coach.

Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

Star Player Tip:

Gabriel Mendez

Club History

LAST YEAR:

Not applicable

YEARS IN NSL:

1st - 1998/99

HONOURS:

Not applicable

GAMES RECORD:

Not applicable

GOALS RECORD:

Not applicable

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Not applicable

RECORD WIN:

Not applicable

RECORD DEFEAT:

Not applicable

Club Contacts

Work Tel. Mobile

President Kathryn Greiner 02 9265 9701

Chairman Remo Nogarotto 02 9360 9055

Dep. Chairman

Emmanuel Zammit 02 9899 6242

Oper. Mgr. Melissa Down 02 9460 2187

Mktg. Gary Pearce 02 9460 2187

Media Off. David Mason 02 9959 3010

Man/Coach Graham Arnold 02 9460 2187

GOODYEAR

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Perth Glory



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks:

Purple/purple/purple

Away shirt/shorts/socks: black/black/black

Strip supplier: Umbro

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Western QBE

Other sponsors: Chicken Treat, Quit, Harvey Fresh, Coca-Cola, 96FM, Peters and Brownes, Driftwood Wines, The Swan Brewery, Tip Top, Mazda, Ansett Australia, Bank West, The West Australian

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Roger Lefort

Mobile: 0417 394 785

Work: (08)9383-9911

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Perth Oval

Address: Pier Street, East Perth

Capacity: 18,000

Seating Capacity: 9,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 400 spaces

Nearest train station: Claisebrook Station, 10 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone:

Nearest taxi rank: Pier Street (outside stadium)

Taxi telephone: (03)5134-4772

Nearest bus stop: Lord Street (outside stadium)

MEDIA

Media box: 22 seats

(reserved in advance)

General media seating: no

Phone lines: Contact (08)9383-9911

Radio Commentary boxes: nil

Television Commentary Boxes: nil

Car parking: Yes, as required

Team Line-Up

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ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$12 - \$15

Children: \$4 (8-16yo)

Concession: \$8

CLUB SHOP

Telephone: (08)9383-9911



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Player Profile - Danny Milosevic

Born: 26-6-1978 in Carlton, Victoria **Height:** 1.89m **Weight:** 87kg
Signed From: Arminia Bielefeld (Germany) **Position:** Goalkeeper
 Midfield **Representative Honours:** Australia U-20s, U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 96/97	Canberra Cosmos	14	0

EVER SINCE MARK BOSNICH made the big time in English football, there has been an army of Australian goalkeepers wanting to emulate the Soccerroo No 1. Perth Glory's Danny Milosevic is no exception.

The mickey-taking 20-year-old returns to the Ericsson Cup after an eventful year in Germany.

"We (keepers) have had the greatest role-models: Bosnich, Mark Schwarzer and Zeljko Kalac have all carved out great careers," says the man who makes the goalmouth his domain.

"My year overseas was a blessing in disguise. It didn't work out perfectly but all the drama makes you stronger - I will be a lot wiser the next time I play abroad."

His two-year contract with Perth has a clause allowing him to transfer to a European club.

Milosevic believes one of the reasons why few Australians have not made the big time in Germany is due to the language barrier.

"If you don't speak German you are left screaming for the ball at training and being quiet during the trips away with the team," says the Olyroo gloveman. However, you will hear no complaints from Milosevic that he did not make a

first-team appearance for Arminia Bielefeld.

"After the World Youth Championships (Malaysia, 1997) I never thought I would go and play in one of the top leagues in Europe," Milosevic made 12 substitute appearances for Bielefeld.

He is quick to point out that he did not join the West Australian-based club because of all the frequent-flyer points he will accumulate over the coming season.

"I have been really impressed with the training we have done in the off-season. Having coaches of the calibre of Bernd Stange and Mich D'Avary means all the players are learning the latest training methods."

When it comes to the vexed question of a finals spot in this season's Ericsson Cup, Milosevic is confident: "If we get a good start then I do not see any reason why we can't finish in the top two."

Championship Tip:

Northern Spirit

Star Player Tip:

Simon Colosimo

Club History

LAST YEAR: 8th

YEARS IN NSL:

3rd - 1996/97 to 1998/99

HONOURS:

Nil

GAMES RECORD:

Scott Miller (51)

GOALS RECORD:

Bobby Despotovski (22)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Bobby Despotovski (14) in 1996/97

RECORD WIN:

6-0 v Canberra Cosmos (League) in 1996/97

RECORD DEFEAT:

1-4 v Sydney Olympic (League) v Canberra Cosmos (League) in 1996/97 and v Adelaide City (League) in 1997/98

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman Nick Tana	08 9383 9911	
Dep. Chairman Paul Afkos	08 9383 9911	
Gen. Mgr. Roger Lefort	08 9383 9911	
Mktg. Jeff Dennis	08 9383 9911	
Media Off. Roger Lefort	08 9383 9911	
Develop. Mich D'Avray	08 9383 9911	
Coach Bernd Stange	08 9383 9911	



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South Melbourne



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Royal blue/royal blue/royal blue & white

Away shirt/shorts/socks: White/white/blue & white

Strip supplier: Puma

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: Vivianes Collection

Other sponsors: Parthenon Marble, Southern Motors

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Peter Filopoulos

Mobile: 0412 558 881

After Hours: (03)9645 9797

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Helen Dimitrileakis

Telephone: (03)9645-9797

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Bob Jane Stadium

Address: 25 Albert Road Drive, Sth Melb

Telephone: (03)9645-9797

Capacity: 18,000

Seating Capacity: 3,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,000 spaces, cost \$4

Nearest tram station: Albert Road Drive, outside stadium

Train station telephone: (03)9619-2300

Nearest taxi rank: South Melbourne CBD

Taxi telephone: (03)13 1755

MEDIA

Media box: 25 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact (03)9645-9797

Radio Commentary boxes: 3

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, as required

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$15

Children: \$3 (12-16yo), Under-12 free

Concession: \$8

Team Line-Up

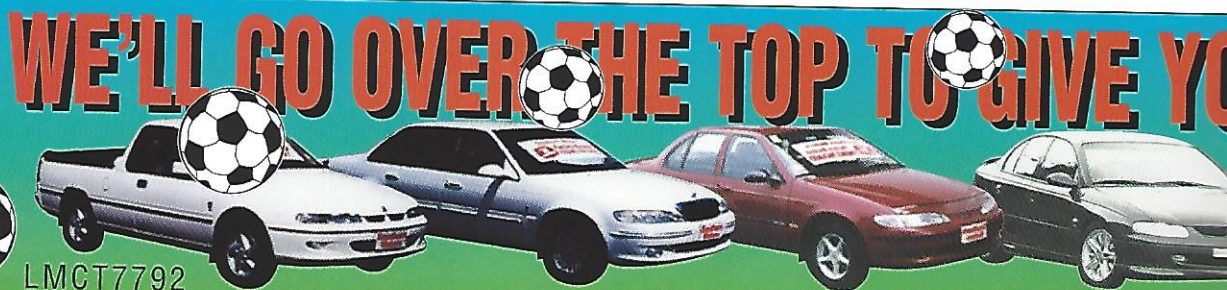
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CLUB SHOP

Address: Champion Sports Bar, Bob Jane Stadium

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm and match days

Telephone: (03)9645-9797



LMCT7792



Player Profile - Con Blatsis

Born: 6-7-1977 in Melbourne **Height:** 1.92m **Weight:** 86kg
Signed From: Australian Institute of Sport **Position:** Centre-back
Representative Honours: VIC, Australia U-20s, U-23s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	South Melbourne	65	4

CON BLATSIS' TRADEMARK is to play with such simplicity that mistakes are no longer a part of his game. You will not see the South Melbourne defender dancing around opposition forwards or zig-zagging his way past a packed midfield.

The part-time golf player enjoys nothing better than blocking out strikers and winning soccer matches for club and country.

The Olyroo stopper has pin pointed the world's most expensive defender, Manchester United's \$24 million PSV Eindhoven capture, Jaap Stam, as the game's consummate professional.

"I am always looking to improve my game and watching Stam in the World Cup for Holland was an inspiration," comments Blatsis.

Olyroo coach Raul Blanco is an admirer of the Australian Institute of Sport graduate.

"In a very short time he has taken some big steps," says Blanco, adding: "He's always willing to learn and listen and they are the ingredients you are looking for in a player."

The humble defender, who names ex-Sydney United striker Ante Milicic as his most difficult opponent, says success as a soccer player was never guaranteed.

"It was not a walk in the park to play for South Melbourne or Australia," says Blatsis.

"I had to work very hard on my game - even now I spend hours on my own, concentrating on my weak points.

"As a junior player I was not skilful but Bill Damianos and I are the only ones who went on to play in the Ericsson Cup. You never know who's going to make the grade when you are kicking a ball around at school."

South Melbourne will go into this season's National Soccer League as favourites and Blatsis admits they will be difficult to beat.

The 2000 Olympic Games hopeful wants to taste success again.

"Winning the Grand Final last year was the best feeling in my career. I can't explain how I felt, but looking back now, I realise that it was huge. It was an absolutely fantastic night. It was like a dream."

Championship Tip:

South Melbourne

Star Player Tip:

Paul Trimboli

Club History

LAST YEAR: 1st
YEARS IN NSL:
 3rd - 1977 to 1998/99
HONOURS:
 champions - 1984, 1990/91
 and 1997/98
 champions (South Div) -
 1984
 runners up - 1981
 minor premiers - 1992/93
 and 1997/98

Minor premiers (South Div) -
 1984 and 1985
 Cup winners - 1989/90 and
 1995/96
 Cup runners up - 1987
 Finalists - 1978, 1980, 1984,
 1985, 1988, 1989/90,
 1990/91, 1991/92, 1992/93,
 1993/94, 1994/95, 1996/97
 and 1997/98

GAMES RECORD:

Steve Blair (338)
GOALS RECORD:
 Paul Trimboli (89)
REC GLS IN SEAS:
 Doug Brown (22) in 1984
RECORD WIN:
 7-0 v Newcastle Rosebud
 (League) in 1984
RECORD DEFEAT:
 0-7 v Marconi (Final) in
 1992/93

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
President George Vasilopoulos	03 9370 8552	
Secretary Nick Sagiakos	03 9645 9797	0412 36 8358
Gen. Mgr. Peter Filopoulos	03 9645 9797	0412 558 881
Develop Off. Angie Postecoglou	03 9645 9797	
Mktg.		
Media Off. Jim Stiliadis	03 9820 8999	0419 557 950
Man/Coach Angie Postecoglou	03 9645 9797	

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Sydney Olympic



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks:

Away shirt/shorts/socks:

Strip supplier: Lotto

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A

Other sponsors: Secom, Thai Airlines,
Lombardy, UTS

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: David Cooper

Work: (02) 9558 5355

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Belmore Sports Ground

Address: Leylands Parade, Belmore

Telephone: (02)9789-2922

Capacity: 22,000

Seating Capacity: 7,500

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 2,000 adjacent to ground,
cost \$2

Nearest train station: Belmore Station, 5
minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)9759-1701

Nearest taxi rank: Belmore Station

Taxi telephone: (02)13-1451

Nearest bus stop: Belmore Station

MEDIA

Media box: 20 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact
Telstra/Optus

Radio Commentary boxes: 5

Television Commentary Boxes: 1

Car parking: Yes, contact club

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$14

Team Line-Up

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Children: \$5 (Under-12 free)

Concession: \$9

CLUB SHOP

Address: Belmore Stadium

Opening hours: Match days

Telephone: (02)9558-5355

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Player Profile - Adem Poric

Born: 22-4-1973 Kensington in London, England **Height:** 5'10"
Weight: 82kg **Signed From:** Notts County (England) **Position:** Midfielder
Representative Honours: NSW, Australia U-20s

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1998/99 - 90/91	St George	11	1

ADEM PORIC IS described in the UK's authoritative Footballers Factfile as a "stocky midfielder...showing himself to be fully committed, especially in the tackle."

For those of us who missed out on Adem Poric's 990 minutes of action at the turn of decade that introduction will have to do.

The forgotten man of Australian soccer quit St George (coached by Frank Arok, now at Olympic as technical director) and was signed by the then-Sheffield Wednesday manager, Trevor Francis.

Seven-years later, Poric is back playing summer soccer with cash-driven Sydney Olympic.

I took a drive out to Poric's abode, a small unit in Belmore. He has no wheels due to a car crash but Poric is happy to talk about football.

"When I left Australia I was earning \$70 to \$80 per week. I remember thinking how rich I was," says the ex-Australian Under-20 representative.

Poric, during the 1997/98 season, had a stint with Notts County who gained promotion to the English Second Division. He also had a spell with Southend under former Liverpool star Ronnie Whelan.

At Sheffield Wednesday, London-born Poric managed only a total of thirty appearances for the Yorkshire club.

Poric played under Francis, Ron Atkinson and David Pleat. He returned to Australia in June, 1998.

Brisbane Strikers coach Frank Farina, before he went to Marconi Fairfield, was the favourite to sign the out-of-contract player.

"Frank was overseas when I returned to Australia and I ended up talking to Branko Culina. The list of players he was signing impressed me."

Poric's sense of humour is endless. What would he be if he wasn't a professional footballer? Unemployed! When quizzed if there's one question he has never been asked by a journalist he retorts: "Yeah, would you like \$50 for your time?"

Without asking, he then recounts times spent on team buses with former roommate at Wednesday, Steve Nichol. Unfortunately, for libel reasons, those stories remain the property of Mr Poric. Suffice to say, Mr Nichol likes to drink...and sing...and sing...and sing.

Championship Tip:

Sydney Olympic

Star Player Tip:

Brett Emerton

Club History

LAST YEAR: 9th

YEARS IN NSL:

22nd - 1977 to 1979 and 1981 to 1998/99

HONOURS:

Champions - 1989/90

Champions (North Div) - 1984 and 1986

Runners up - 1984, 1986 and 1989

Cup winners - 1983 and 1985

Cup runners up - 1989 and 1989/90

Finalists - 1984, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1989/90, 1991/92, 1993/94 and 1995/96

GAMES RECORD:

Gary Meier (296)

GOALS RECORD:

Marshall Soper (45)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Kris Trajanovski (19) in 1995/96

RECORD WIN:

6-0 v Apia Leichhardt (Cup) in 1986

RECORD DEFEAT:

1-8 v Canberra Cosmos (League) in 1997/98

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
President Nick Politis	02 9331 5000	
Gen. Mgr. Frank Martin	02 9558 5355	
Develop. Off. Peter Tsekenis	02 9558 5355	
Mktg. Tony Rallis	02 9558 5355	
Media Off. David Cooper	02 9558 5355	
Man/Coach Branko Culina	02 9558 5355	

SECOM HOME SECURITY

FREECALL 1800 248 208



Sydney United



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/white/blue
Away shirt/shorts/socks: black/black/black
Strip supplier: Puma

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: N/A
Other sponsors: McGrath Holden, BBX

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Rozzanna Bozabaljian
Mobile: 0412 500 015
Work: (02)9823-6413

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Parramatta Stadium
Address: O'Connell Street, Parramatta
Telephone: (02)9683-5755
Capacity: 30,000
Seating Capacity: 16,000
Wheelchair Access: Yes
Disabled Toilets: Yes

TRANSPORT

Car parking: Parramatta Swimming Centre,
O'Connell Street, 200 spaces at no cost
Nearest train station: Parramatta Station,
20 minute walk from stadium
Train station telephone: (02)9848-9249
Nearest taxi rank: Parramatta Station
Taxi telephone: (02)13-1017
Nearest bus stop: Church Street, Victoria Rd
Buses telephone: (02)9683-2877

MEDIA

Media box: no
General media seating: 18 seats
Phone lines: installed as required. Contact
Telstra.
Radio Commentary boxes: 4
Television Commentary Boxes: 2
Car parking: contact club

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Team Line-Up

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contact club

CLUB SHOP

Address: Parramatta Stadium
Opening hours: Match days
Telephone: (02)9823-6413

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Player Profile - Nathan Day

Born: 25-11-1973 in Elizabeth, South Australia **Height:** 6' 1"
Weight: 80kg **Signed From:** Adelaide Sharks
Position: Midfield/forward
Representative Honours: Sth Aust.

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Adelaide Sharks	67	9

THE INFLUENCE DAVID MITCHELL is about to have on Sydney United's attacking midfielder, Nathan Day, will be worth watching.

Mitchell, who has travelled the globe as a professional soccer player, was the key figure in Day leaving his home-town for the 1996/97 Grand Finalists.

"Dave's got experience, attitude, a good reputation and influence," says one of the quickest players in the Ericsson Cup.

"Before I actually signed for United, I had been talking to Dave (Mitchell) for two or three months."

For all his speed and skill, Day is still to break double figures in the Ericsson Cup all-time goalscoring charts. Mitchell, a renowned striker in the Dutch and English leagues, wants the ex-Sharks ace to score week-in, week-out.

Says Day: "That was mentioned and hopefully with a good bunch of players around me I can lift my game and score more goals."

Coached at an early level by Rocky Aloisi, the father of Australian representatives Ross and John, the towering 6'1" all-action Day is desperate for the season to commence.

"I want to play in a Grand Final and

having competed against a lot of the United team, I know how good they are."

His new next-door neighbour Mile Sterjovski, has had a busy off-season with the Olyroos. Does Day still dream of playing for his country?

"I know I must be more consistent but the Socceroos? Sure why not. Living and playing in Sydney will give me more publicity and turning out for a side capable of winning the Championship must help."

Former Sharks coach Raul Blanco, now at the helm of the Australian team, is aware of Day, who started his career for cross-town rivals Adelaide City.

"I get on quite well with Raul. I spoke to him last season and he mentioned my lack of consistency. Hopefully, he'll remember me for different things this season."

However, club coach Mitchell, after all, does have influence. Mitchell was part of the Olyroo coaching staff earlier this year.

Championship Tip:

Sydney United

Star Player Tip:

Corey Artone

Club History

PAST YEAR:

th
YEARS IN NSL:
 6th - 1984 to 1998/99

HONOURS:

runners up - 1988 and
 1996/97
 minor premiers - 1996/97
 minor premiers (North Div) -
 1986

Cup winners - 1987
 Cup runner up - 1993/94
 Finalists - 1985, 1986,
 1987, 1988, 1993/94,
 1994/95, 1995/96,
 1996/97 and 1997/98

GAMES RECORD:

Manis Lamond (239)

GOALS RECORD:

Graham Arnold (67)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

David Zdrilic (21) in
 1996/97

RECORD WIN:

7-0 v Collingwood (League)
 in 1996/97

RECORD DEFEAT:

1-7 v Sydney City (Cup) in
 1980

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman John Hewson	02 9321 2104	
President Robert Krslovic	02 9725 5833	
Gen. Mgr.		
Rozanna Bozabalian	02 9823 6418	
Project Mgr. Ante Grabovac	02 9823 6418	
Development		
Michael Santalab	02 9823 6418	
Media Off.		
Rozanna Bozabalian	02 9823 6418	
Man/Coach David Mitchell	02 9823 6418	

Quality of the Football



Mitre





Wollongong Wolves



CLUB COLOURS

Home shirt/shorts/socks: Red/red/red

Away shirt/shorts/socks: Blue/blue/white

Strip supplier: Lotto

SPONSOR DETAILS

Major sponsor: BHP

Other sponsors: Fraternity Club

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

Name: Michael Brooks

Mobile: 0412 340 129

Work: (02)4226-3988

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Contact: Tony Reynolds

Telephone: 018 422 481

STADIUM INFORMATION

Home Stadium: Brandon Park

Address: Squires Way, Fairymeadow

Telephone: (02)4226-3988

Capacity: 15,000

Seating Capacity: 3,000

Wheelchair Access: Yes

Disabled Toilets: No

TRANSPORT

Car parking: 1,500, cost \$2

Nearest train station: Fairymeadow Station,
5 minute walk from stadium

Train station telephone: (02)4223-5582

Nearest taxi rank: Fairymeadow/North
Wollongong

Taxi telephone: (02)4229-9311

Nearest bus stop: Fairymeadow/North
Wollongong

MEDIA

Media box: 10 seats

General media seating: as required

Phone lines: Installed as required. Contact
(02)4226-3988

Radio Commentary boxes: nil

Television Commentary Boxes: one

Car parking: Yes, as required

ADMISSION PRICES (subject to change)

Adult: \$11 - \$15

Children: \$4 - \$6 (7-11yo)

Concession: \$9 - \$11

Team Line-Up

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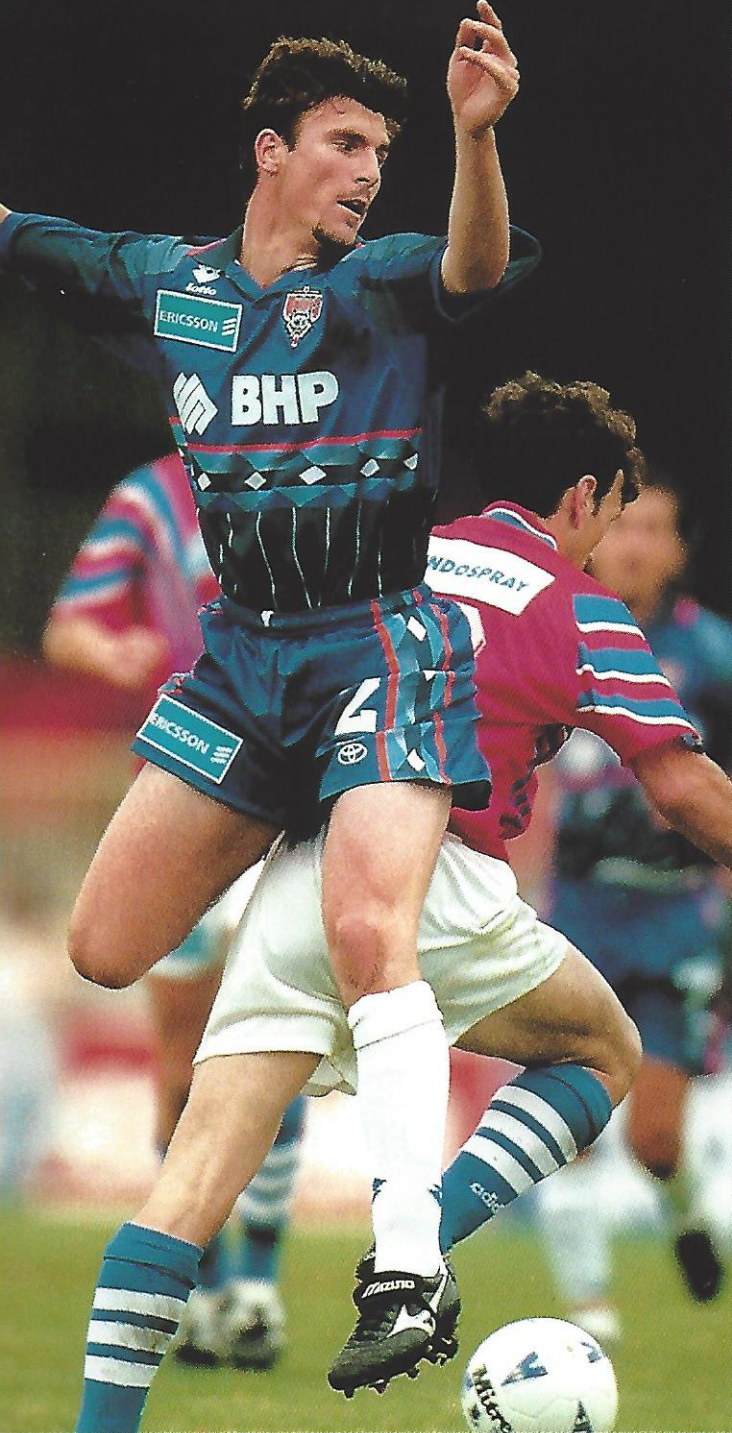
CLUB SHOP

Address: Brandon Park

Opening hours: Mon, Wed-Fri 9:30am-5pm
and match days

Telephone: (02)4226-3988

Do you feel the hunger?



Player Profile - Alvin Ceccoli

Born: 5-8-1974 in Sydney, NSW **Height:** 1.80m **Weight:** 80kg
Signed From: Sydney Olympic **Position:** Left wing-back
Representative Honours: nil

Ericsson Cup Details:

Season(s)	Club	Apps	Goals
1995/96 - 97/98	Wollongong Wolves	67	11

IF ALVIN CECCOLI never scores another goal in his career, then the one he put past arch-rivals Marconi in last season's Ericsson Cup play-offs will be just as important as championship medals or international appearances the flying wing-back might rack up in the next few years.

The underrated 24-year-old's stunning left-foot strike was one of the goals of the season.

"We were 2-0 down and at that stage of the game nothing was happening for us," enthuses Ceccoli.

"I picked up the ball in my own half and after a one-two I saw that Tony (Perenich) was man-marked in the box. I hit it sweetly."

The Wolves' 1997/98 Player of the Season - whose performances just behind goal-poacher Scott Chipperfield were seldom less than superb - is just as modest about his club's prospects in the 15-team National Soccer League.

How good are Wollongong? What's the coach like? Have you a chance of lifting the Ericsson Cup?

"We are becoming a good side...We've got a winning coach...We're getting there." Ceccoli's responses are short and sweet, a bit like the game he puts together

for his growing admirers at Brandon Park.

The former Sydney Olympic defender, who spent three years with the club without making a first-team appearance, also wants a regular spot in the international set-up.

Rumours were rife that he was likely to gain selection for the mainly home-based Socceroo squad participating in the 1998 Optus World Series.

"I was disappointed. I had heard a couple of whispers so I got my hopes up a bit."

Ceccoli has moved to Fairy Meadow. He will no longer spend two-and-a-half-hours a day traveling to Wollongong for training and home games.

"It will give me more time for training. I am a full-time soccer player and I want to give it everything I've got," says Ceccoli.

"I don't want to look back and say 'I wish I'd done this, I wish I'd done that.'"

Something tells you that the Wollongong regular could be providing the ammunition for his club and country this season.

Championship Tip:

Wollongong Wolves

Star Player Tip:

Matthew Horsely

Club History

LAST YEAR: 4th
YEARS IN NSL:

1981 to 1986,
 1988 to 1998/99

HONOURS:

Minor premiers - 1988
 Challengers - 1982, 1988,
 1991/92, 1992/93 and
 1997/98

GAMES RECORD:

Matt Horsley (191)

GOALS RECORD:

Pat Brodnik (34)

REC GLS IN SEAS:

Phil O'Connor (18) in
 1982

RECORD WIN:

8-0 v Canberra Cosmos

(League) in 1997/98

RECORD DEFEAT:

0-6 v Preston (League) in
 1980, v Marconi
 (League) in 1989, v St
 George (League) in
 1989/90 and v South
 Melbourne (League) in
 1995/96

Club Contacts

	Work Tel.	Mobile
Chairman Doug Symes	02 4226 3988	
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Man/Coach		
Nick Theodorakopoulos	02 9281 2288	

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1997/98 Ericsson Cup Ladder

TEAM	PLD	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
South Melbourne	26	13	9	4	56	41	48
Carlton SC	26	12	9	5	44	24	45
Adelaide City	26	13	4	9	45	30	43
Sydney United	26	11	10	5	37	36	43
Marconi Fairfield	26	12	7	7	33	25	43
Wollongong Wolves	26	13	3	10	51	33	42
Melbourne Knights	26	11	6	9	37	35	39
Perth Glory	26	10	6	10	35	40	3
Sydney Olympic	26	10	5	11	37	43	35
Adelaide Sharks	26	10	4	12	32	38	34
Gippsland Falcons	26	8	7	11	28	36	31
Brisbane Strikers	26	6	5	15	23	40	23
Newcastle Breakers	26	4	9	13	30	50	21
Canberra Cosmos	26	3	8	15	29	56	17

1997/98 Ericsson Cup Results Grid

	ADEL CITY	BRIS STRK	CANB COSMOS	CARLT	GIPPS FALCON	MARC FAIR	MELB KNGTS	NEWC BREAK	PERTH GLORY	STH MELB	SYD UTD	UTS OLY	ADEL SHARK	WOLL CITY
ADELAIDE CITY		1-0	4-1	1-1	3-0	5-0	3-1	4-0	0-1	3-1	0-2	0-1	3-1	4-2
BRISBANE STRK	2-2		2-2	0-1	1-2	0-0	1-2	1-1	0-1	0-3	0-3	1-0	2-0	2-1
CANB COSMOS	1-2	2-1		1-3	1-3	0-2	1-1	1-1	1-2	1-1	1-3	8-1	1-0	1-3
CARLTON	3-1	1-1	2-0		4-1	0-1	1-1	3-0	2-1	2-3	1-1	0-1	1-1	1-0
GIPPS FALCONS	1-0	1-0	0-0	0-0		0-1	1-2	1-1	2-1	1-1	1-1	3-2	0-0	2-3
MARCONI FAIR	2-0	1-0	2-0	1-2	3-0		5-0	2-1	0-1	2-2	1-0	1-1	2-0	0-0
MELB KNIGHTS	2-0	2-0	3-1	2-4	0-1	2-1		4-1	1-2	1-1	0-0	2-1	1-0	1-0
NEWCASTLE	0-0	1-2	2-1	0-0	1-5	0-0	0-0		2-3	0-2	3-1	2-3	4-2	1-2
PERTH GLORY	1-4	1-3	1-1	0-0	2-1	1-1	3-2	3-4		4-1	0-2	1-0	2-2	0-3
STH MELBOURNE	4-1	5-1	1-1	0-5	2-1	3-1	2-2	2-1	3-3		3-0	2-2	4-1	3-2
SYDNEY UNITED	0-1	2-1	4-1	1-1	1-1	1-1	0-3	2-0	0-0	2-2		0-0	2-1	2-1
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	0-1	3-0	1-1	3-2	3-0	1-0	2-1	2-2	3-1	1-3	0-3		3-0	0-3
ADEL SHARKS	1-1	2-1	3-0	0-3	1-0	0-2	2-1	3-1	1-0	2-0	1-2	3-1		3-1
WOLL WOLVES	2-1	0-1	8-0	3-1	2-0	5-1	2-0	1-1	1-0	1-2	2-2	3-2	0-2	

1997/98 Leading Goalscorers (to end of Round 26)

19
Damian Mori (Adelaide City)

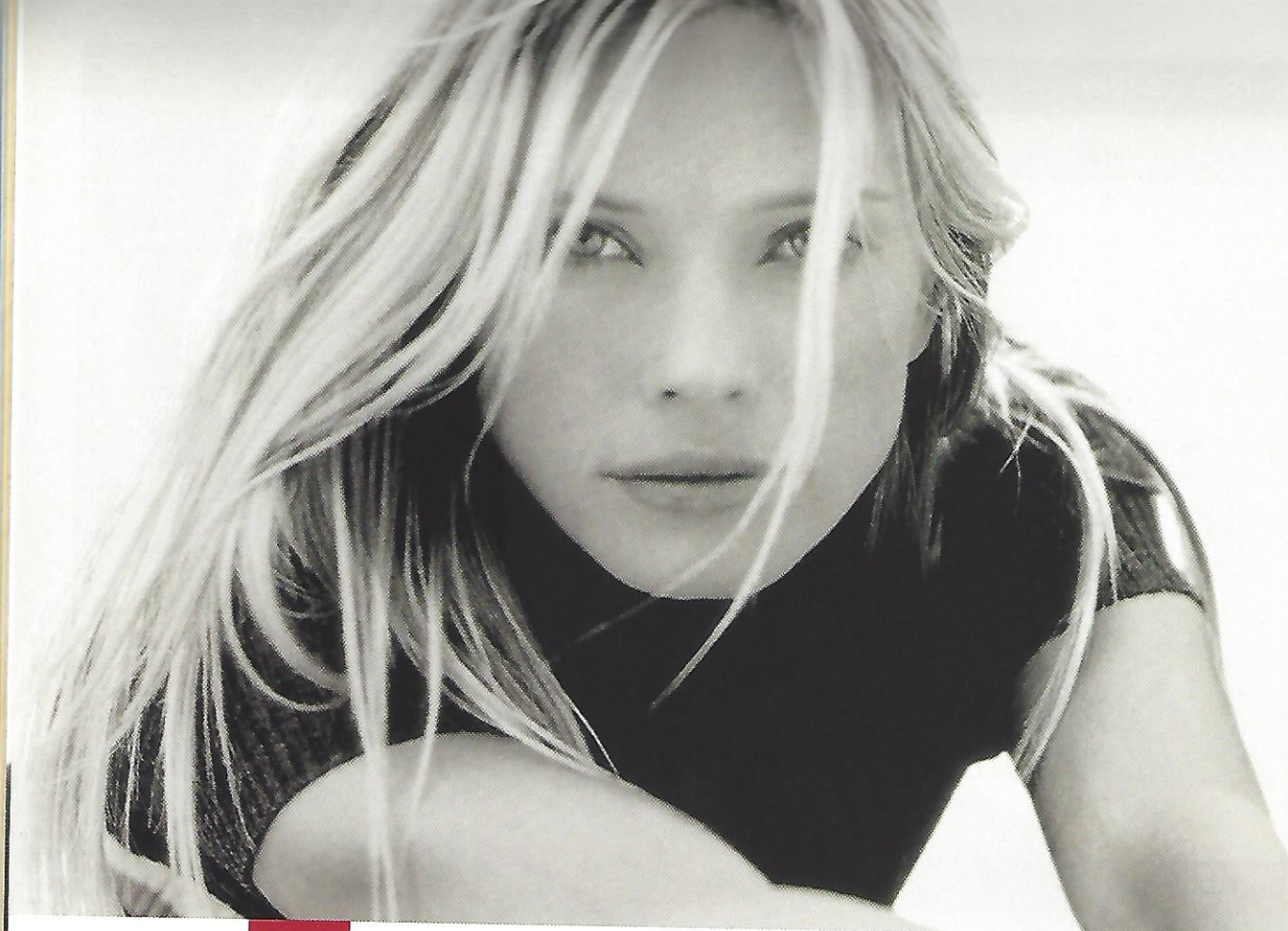
14
Norman Tome (Sydney Olympic)

13
Pablo Cardozo (Adelaide Sharks)
Andy Vlahos (Carlton SC)
Scott Chipperfield (Wollongong Wolves)

11
Tom Pondeljak (Melbourne Knights)
Ivan Zelic (Melbourne Knights)
John Markovski (Carlton SC)

10
Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)
John Anastasiadis (Carlton SC)

9
Abbas Saad (Sydney United)
Peter Buljan (Canberra Cosmos)



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1997/98 Ericsson Cup Finals Details

1ST ELIMINATION FINAL - 1ST LEG

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2 (T. PERINICH 56'; K. SALAPASIDIS 83', 86') ADELAIDE CITY 0

19-4-98. Brandon Park, Wollongong. Attendance: 10,954. Referee: S. Micallef.

Yellow Cards: (Wollongong) Sinozic 15'; Chipperfield 75'; Souris 85'.
(Adelaide) Costanzo 6'; Mennillo 24'; Mori 44'; Tobin 81'.

2ND ELIMINATION FINAL 1ST LEG

MARCONI FAIRFIELD 1 (F. AWARITEFE 22') SYDNEY UNITED 0

19-4-98. Marconi Stadium, Sydney. Attendance: 10,113. Referee: M. Breeze.

Yellow Cards: (Marconi) McDonald 36'; M. Babic 39'; Kim 67'.
(Sydney Utd) Hooker 17'; Bennett 36'; Bilokapic 43'; Kupresak 59'.
Red Card: (Marconi) McDonald 43'.

1ST ELIMINATION FINAL - 2ND LEG

ADELAIDE CITY 2 (M. BROOKS 17'; N. SABLJAK 80') WOLLONGONG WOLVES 2 (A. CECCOLI 56'; K. SALAPASIDIS 75')

26-4-98. Hindmarsh Stadium, Adelaide. Attendance: 4,497. Referee: E. Brazzale.

Yellow Cards: (Wollongong) Salapasidis 65'.

2ND ELIMINATION FINAL - 2ND LEG

SYDNEY UNITED 0 MARCONI FAIRFIELD 1 (F. AWARITEFE 71')

26-4-98. Parramatta Stadium, Sydney. Attendance: 10,786. Referee: M. Shield.

Yellow Cards: (Sydney Utd) Culina 63'; Phillips 79'.
(Marconi) M. Babic 25'; Z. Babic 76'.
Red Card: (Sydney Utd) Kupresak 32'.

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL - 1ST LEG

CARLTON SC 1 (J. MARKOVSKI 89') SOUTH MELBOURNE 2 (P. TRIMBOLI 24'; J. ANASTASIADIS 34')

26-4-98. Optus Oval, Melbourne. Attendance: 6,767. Referee: Brett Hugo.

Yellow Cards: (Carlton) Anastasiadis 23'; Della Rocca 32'; Douglas 73'; Markovski 82'; Josifovski 86'.
(Sth Melbourne) Lozanovski 7'; Petkovic 89'.

MINOR SEMI-FINAL

MARCONI FAIRFIELD 2 (F. AWARITEFE 49'; B. MALONEY 65') WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1 (A. CECCOLI 69')

2-5-98. Parramatta Stadium. Attendance: 8646. Referee: G. Connolly.

Yellow Cards: (Marconi) Smith 32'.
(Wollongong) Surjan 54'.

MAJOR SEMI-FINAL - 2ND LEG

SOUTH MELBOURNE 1 (G. LOZANOVSKI 13') CARLTON SC 0

3-5-98. Bob Jane Stadium, Melbourne. Attendance: 14,850. Referee: E. Lennie.

Yellow Cards: (Sth Melbourne) Clarkson 44'.
(Carlton) Grella 32'; Anthopoulos 33'; Colosimo 57'; Bresciano 60'; Douglas 89'. Red Card: Anthopoulos 89'.

PRELIMINARY FINAL

CARLTON SC 1 (M. BRESCIANO 89') MARCONI FAIRFIELD 0

10-5-98. Olympic Park, Melbourne. Attendance: 3672. Referee: S. Micallef.

Yellow Cards: (Carlton) Lapsansky 87'.
(Marconi) Casserly 10'; McDonald 54'; M. Babic 59'.

All the details of 1997/98 Ericsson Cup Grand Final

Final score: South Melbourne 2 (Anastasiadis 9th & Boutsianis 89th) - Carlton 1 (Stergiopoulos 78th).

Played: Saturday, May 16, 1998, at Olympic Park, Melbourne (first-ever night grand final).

Attendance: 15,706.

Referee: Eugene Brazzale.

Linesmen: Parry & Bowdler.

Fourth official: Connolly.

Yellow Cards: Blatsis 27th, Trajkovski 39th, Douglas 54th, Colosimo 73rd, D.Cervinski 77th & Markovski 83rd.

Red cards: Nil.

THE TEAMS:

South Melbourne: No.1 Michael Petkovic, 2 Steve Iosifidis, 3 Fausto De Amicis, 5 Con Blatsis, 6 David Clarkson, 9 Paul Trimboli (Capt), 11 Bill Damianos, 15 Goran Lozanovski (8 Vaughan Coveny 75th), 16 Tansel Baser, 17 John Anastasiadis (12 Con Boutsianis 84th).

Subs not used - Nick Orlic, Michael Curcija, Chris Jones.

Coach - Angie Postecoglou.

Carlton: 1 Dean Anastasiadis, 2 Robert Trajkovski, 5 Sean Douglas (Capt), 7 Kresimir Marusic, 10 Lubo Lapsansky, 11 Andy Vlahos (25 Adrian Cervinski 64th), 12 Simon Colosimo, 14 John Markovski, 15 David Cervinski (3 Marcus Stergiopoulos 77th), 17 Mark Atkinson, 23 Marco Bresciano.

Subs not used - David Della Rocca, Alex Josifovski, Adrian Cagalj.

Coach - Eddie Krncevic.

Marsden Medal for Man of the Match: Fausto De Amicis (Sth Melb)

Ericsson Cup 1997/98 Crowds, Round by Round

Round	Total for Round	Round Average	Season Aggregate	Best crowd of Round
1	33 547	4792	33 547	7,007 at Sydney Olympic -v- Marconi Fairfield
2	46 597	6657	80 144	17,673 at Perth Glory -v- Adelaide City
3	29 538	4220	109 682	5,737 at Adelaide City -v- Sydney United
4	42 704	6100	152 386	14,384 at Perth Glory -v- Melbourne Knights
5	29 736	4248	182 122	5,235 at Marconi Fairfield -v- South Melbourne
6	44 464	6352	226 586	16,905 at Perth Glory -v- Sydney Olympic
7	28 214	4031	254 800	5,641 at Sydney Olympic -v- Sydney United
8	42 431	6062	297 231	17,030 at Perth Glory -v- Adelaide Sharks
9	20 348	2907	317 579	4,064 at Adelaide Sharks -v- Sydney United
10	37 497	5357	355 076	15,379 at Perth Glory -v- South Melbourne
11	45 503	6500	400 579	15,080 at Perth Glory -v- Wollongong Wolves
12	39 815	5687	440 394	12,174 at Perth Glory -v- Canberra Cosmos
13	51 195	7314	491 589	17,764 at Perth Glory -v- Sydney United
14	28 836	4119	520 425	6,115 at Adelaide City -v- South Melbourne
15	47 158	6737	567 583	14,687 at Perth Glory -v- Carlton SC
16	29 473	4210	597 056	9,217 at Melbourne Knights -v- South Melbourne
17	33 439	4777	630 495	13,341 at Perth Glory -v- Brisbane Strikers
18	27 177	3882	657 672	5,509 at Sydney Olympic -v- South Melbourne
19	36 471	5210	694 143	13,228 at Perth Glory -v- Newcastle Breakers
20	24 586	3512	718 729	5,185 at Melbourne Knights -v- Carlton SC
21	34 772	4968	753 501	11,260 at Perth Glory -v- Gippsland Falcons
22	26 057	3722	779 558	7,362 at Marconi Fairfield -v- Sydney United
23	36 369	5196	815 927	15,725 at Perth Glory -v- Marconi Fairfield
24	24 370	3481	840 297	5,670 at South Melbourne -v- Perth Glory
25	30 437	4348	870 734	7,937 at Adelaide City -v- Adelaide Sharks
26	28 813	4116	899 547	8,725 at South Melbourne -v- Carlton SC
Finals Week 1	21 067	10534	920 614	10,954 at Wollongong Wolves -v- Adelaide City
Finals Week 2	22 050	7350	942 664	10,786 at Sydney United -v- Marconi Fairfield
Finals Week 3	23 496	11748	966 160	14,850 at South Melbourne -v- Carlton SC
Finals Week 4	3 672	3672	969 832	3,672 at Carlton SC -v- Marconi Fairfield
Finals Week 5	15 706	15706	985538	15,706 at South Melbourne -v- Carlton SC

Ericsson Cup Roll of Honour

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	TOP 4/5 CUP WINNER
1977	Sydney City	Brisbane City	No competition
1978	West Adelaide	Brisbane City	Sydney City
1979	Marconi Fairfield	Adelaide City	Sydney City
1980	Sydney City	Marconi Fairfield	Heidelberg United
1981	Sydney City	Brisbane Lions	No competition
1982	Sydney City	Apia Leichardt	St George
1983	St George	Sydney Olympic	No competition

* 1977 to 1983 (One division, with champion first past the post)

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	DIVISION CHAMPION
1984	South Melbourne	Newcastle Rosebud	North - Sydney Olympic / South - South Melbourne
1985	Brunswick United	Sydney Olympic	North - Sydney City / South - Brunswick United
1986	Adelaide City	Sydney City	North - Sydney Olympic / South - Adelaide City

* 1984 to 1986 (Two divisions, with championship decided by national grand final)

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	TOP 5 CUP WINNER
1987	Apia Leichardt	Sydney United	St George

* 1987 (One division, with champion first past the post)

SEASON	CHAMPION	CUP WINNER	PREMIER
1988	Marconi Fairfield	Apia Leichardt	Wollongong Wolves
1989	Marconi Fairfield	Adelaide City	Marconi Fairfield
1989/90	Sydney Olympic	South Melbourne	Marconi Fairfield
1990/91	South Melbourne	Parramatta Eagles	Melbourne Knights
1991/92	Adelaide City	Adelaide City	Melbourne Knights
1992/93	Marconi Fairfield	Heidelberg United	South Melbourne
1993/94	Adelaide City	Parramatta Eagles	Melbourne Knights
1994/95	Melbourne Knights	Melbourne Knights	Melbourne Knights
1995/96	Melbourne Knights	South Melbourne	Marconi Fairfield
1996/97	Brisbane Strikers	Collingwood Warriors	Sydney United
1997/98	South Melbourne	No competition	South Melbourne

* 1988 to 1997/98 (One division, champion decided by national grand final, premier decided by first past the post)



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Ericsson Cup Awards History

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

1977	Jim Rooney (Marconi Fairfield)
1978	Ken Boden (Newcastle KB United)
1979	Ivo Prskalo (Marconi Fairfield)
1980	Jim Hermiston (Brisbane Lions)
1981	Bobby Russell (Adelaide City)
1982	Peter Katholos (Sydney Olympic)
1983	Joe Watson (Sydney City)
1984	Serge Melta (Adelaide City)
1985	Graham Honeyman (Adelaide Sharks)
1986	Bobby Russell (South Melbourne) Graham Arnold (Sydney United)
1987	Andrew Zinni (Melbourne Zebras) Frank Farina (Marconi Fairfield)
1988	Paul Wade (South Melbourne) Frank Farina (Marconi Fairfield)
1989	Zlatko Nasteovski (Marconi Fairfield)
1989/90	Zeljko Adzic (Melbourne Knights)
1990/91	Milan Ivanovic (Adelaide City)
1991/92	Josip Biskic (Melbourne Knights)
1992/93	Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)
1993/94	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)
1994/95	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)
1995/96	Damian Mori (Adelaide City)
1996/97	Kresimir Marusic (Sydney United)
1997/98	Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)

LEAGUE TOP SCORERS

1977	Dixie Deans (Adelaide City) - 16
1978	Ken Boden (Newcastle KB Utd) - 14 Clive Eaton (Western Suburbs) - 14
1979	Mark Jankovic (Marconi Fairfield) - 18
1980	Gary Cole (Heidelberg Utd) - 21
1981	Gary Cole (Heidelberg Utd) - 16
1982	John Kosmina (Sydney City) - 23
1983	Doug Brown (South Melbourne) - 16
1984	Doug Brown (South Melbourne) - 22
1985	Charlie Egan (South Melbourne) - 21
1986	Graham Arnold (Sydney United) - 16
1987	Frank Farina (Marconi Fairfield) - 16
1988	Frank Farina (Marconi Fairfield) - 16
1989	Zlatko Nasteovski (Marconi Fairfield) - 20
1989/90	David Seal (Sydney United) - 15
1990/91	David Seal (Marconi Fairfield) - 17
1991/92	Tim Bredbury (Sydney Olympic) - 15 Kimion Taliadoros (South Melbourne) - 15
1992/93	Francis Awaritefe (South Melbourne) - 18
1993/94	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights) - 17
1994/95	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights) - 18
1995/96	Damian Mori (Adelaide City) - 31
1996/97	David Zdrilic (Sydney United) - 21
1997/98	Damian Mori (Adelaide City) - 19

UNDER-21 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

1977	John Kosmina (Adelaide Sharks)
1978	Ian Souness (Sydney City)
1979	Eddie Krncevic (Marconi Fairfield)
1980	John Spanos (Sydney City)
1981	David Mitchell (Adelaide City)
1982	David Lowe (Newcastle KB Utd)
1983	Oscar Crino (South Melbourne)
1984	Tony Franken (Canberra City)
1985	Alan Hunter (Brisbane Lions)
1986	Ernie Tapai (Melbourne City)
1987	John Markovski (Sunshine George Cross)
1988	Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)
1989	Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)
1989/90	Paul Okon (Marconi Fairfield)
1990/91	Paul Okon (Marconi Fairfield)
1991/92	Kevin Muscat (Heidelberg United)
1992/93	Steve Corica (Marconi Fairfield)
1993/94	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)
1994/95	Mark Viduka (Melbourne Knights)
1995/96	Jim Tsekinis (Adelaide Sharks)
1996/97	Kasey Wehrman (Brisbane Strikers)
1997/98	Brett Emerton (Sydney Olympic)

COACH OF THE YEAR

1977	Rale Rasic (Marconi Fairfield)
1978	Gerry Chaldi (Sydney City)
1979	Les Scheinflug (Marconi Fairfield)
1980	John Margaritis (South Melbourne)
1981	Eddie Thomson (Sydney City)
1982	Frank Arok (St George)
1983	Frank Arok (St George)
1984	Eddie Thomson (Sydney City)
1985	Eddie Thomson (Sydney City)
1986	Drago Sekularic (Melbourne City)
1987	Rale Rasic (Apia Leichardt)
1988	Brian Garvey (South Melbourne)
1989	Berti Mariani (Marconi Fairfield)
1989/90	Berti Mariani (Marconi Fairfield)
1990/91	Zoran Matic (Adelaide City)
1991/92	David Ratcliffe (Wollongong Wolves)
1992/93	Jim Pyrgolios (South Melbourne)
1993/94	Mirko Bazic (Melbourne Knights)
1994/95	Zoran Matic (Adelaide City)
1995/96	John Perin (Adelaide City)
1996/97	Branko Culina (Sydney United)
1997/98	Angie Postecoglou (South Melbourne)

1997/98 Ericsson Cup Awards

PLAYERS' PLAYER OF THE YEAR - WARREN MEDAL

Paul Trimboli (South Melbourne)

ANSETT AUSTRALIA LEADING GOALSCORER OF THE YEAR

Damian Mori (Adelaide City) - scorer of 19 goals

COACH OF THE YEAR

Angie Postecoglou (South Melbourne)

UNDER-21 PLAYER OF THE YEAR - PAPASAVAS MEDAL

Brett Emerton (UTS Olympic)

UHLSPORT GOALKEEPER OF THE YEAR

Jason Petkovic (Adelaide City)

LOTTO REFEREE OF THE YEAR

Eugene Brazzale

LOTTO ASSISTANT REFEREE OF THE YEAR

Michael Parry

NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE PLAYER OF THE YEAR

SOUTHERN DIVISION
Ivica Klarica (Carlton SC)

NORTHERN DIVISION

Mile Sterjovski (Australian Institute of Sport)

1997/98 Ericsson Cup Media Awards

Magazine Award for Best Report

Anthony Raineri (Sports Monthly)

Magazine Award for Best Feature Report

Chris Maher (Soccer Australia Magazine)

Radio Award for Best Report (news or feature)

Mario Etchart (SBS Radio)

Television Award for Best Report (sport news content)

Robert Grasso (SBS Television)

Television Award for Best Feature Story

Neil Cordy (Channel 10)

Photography Award for Best Picture

Joe Mann (The Daily Telegraph Mirror)

Newspaper Award for Best Report

James Nicholson (The Canberra Times)

Newspaper Award for Best Feature

Patrick Mangan (The Sunday Age)

Most Outstanding Achievement in Soccer Journalism

Peter Desira (The Herald Sun)

1997/98 National Youth League Finals Results

SOUTHERN DIVISION

Elimination Semi-Final:

Gippsland Falcons 1 Victorian Institute of Sport 3

Preliminary Semi-Final:

Melbourne Knights 0 Carlton SC 3

Preliminary Final

Melbourne Knights 3 Victorian Institute of Sport 4

Divisional Grand Final

Carlton SC 0 Victorian Institute of Sport 2

Divisional Play-off

Victorian Institute of Sport 1 Adelaide City 3

NORTHERN DIVISION

Elimination Semi-Final

Sydney United 0 Wollongong Wolves 1

Preliminary Semi-Final

Australian Institute of Sport 2 UTS Olympic 2

Preliminary Final

UTS Olympic 1 Wollongong Wolves 2

Divisional Grand Final

Australian Institute of Sport 2 Wollongong Wolves 0

NATIONAL PLAY-OFF

Adelaide City 1 Australian Institute of Sport 4

Did You Know That?

MOST CONSECUTIVE VICTORIES: 9

by Sydney Olympic in 1984 and by Sydney United in 1996/97

MOST CONSECUTIVE DEFEATS: 12 games

by Canberra Cosmos in 1996/97 and 1997/98

LONGEST UNDEFEATED RUN: 22 games

by Apia Leichhardt during 1986 and 1987

MOST TEAM GOALS IN A SEASON: 68

by Sydney City in 1982

LEAST TEAM GOALS IN A SEASON: 16

by Green Gully in 1986

BIGGEST CROWD (REGULAR SEASON): 18,367

at Newcastle's International Sports Centre in 1979, for Newcastle KB United v UTS Olympic

BIGGEST CROWD (FINAL): 40,446

at Brisbane's Suncorp Stadium in 1996/97, for grand final between Brisbane Strikers v Sydney United

LOWEST CROWD EVER: 192

at Sydney's Gabbie Stadium in 1989, for Blacktown City v Heidelberg United

QUICKEST GOAL: 3.7 seconds

by Damian Mori for Adelaide City v Sydney United in 1995/96, at Adelaide's Hindmarsh Stadium

MOST CLUB GOALS IN ONE GAME: 10

by Adelaide City in 10-3 win v Mooroolbark in 1977, at Olympic Sports Field in Adelaide

MOST INDIVIDUAL GOALS IN ONE GAME: 6

by Ivan Kelic of the Melbourne Knights in 8-1 win over Wollongong Mac., at Knights Stadium in 1990/91 and by Pat Brodnik of Wollongong City in 7-0 win over Adelaide Sharks, at Brandon Park in 1989/90

HIGHEST SCORE DRAW: 5-5

by Newcastle Breakers v Canberra Cosmos in 1995/96, at Breakers Stadium

MOST WINS IN ONE SEASON: 20

by Sydney City in 1982

MOST DEFEATS IN ONE SEASON: 24

by Newcastle Breakers in 1994/95

YOUNGEST PLAYER (FINAL): 16 yrs 5 mths

John Markovski of Sunshine George Cross in 1986

BEST REGULAR SEASON AGGREGATE

ATTENDANCE: 997,004

in 1996/97

BEST CLUB SINGLE SEASON HOME

AVERAGE CROWD: 14,972

by Perth Glory in 1997/98

MOST TEAM GRAND FINAL WINS: 5

by Marconi, South Melbourne and Adelaide City

MOST CLUBS COACHED: 7

by Rale Rasic (Marconi, Adelaide City, Blacktown, South Melbourne, Apia, Parramatta Eagles and Canberra Cosmos)

MOST GAMES COACHED: 439

by Frank Arok, at St George, Marconi, South Melbourne and Gippsland

MOST CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS: 4

by Marconi and Sydney City

PLAYERS TO SCORE 100 OR MORE CAREER GOALS: 8

they are Rod Brown (137), John Kosmina (133), Marshall Soper (120), Damian Mori (111), Gary Cole (109), Warren Spink (104), Frank Farina (102) and Francis Awaritefe (102)

PLAYERS TO PLAY 300 OR MORE GAMES: 25

they are Serg Melta (445), Mike O'Shea (406), Theo Selemidis (394), Gary Phillips (377), Alan Tobin (376), Danny Wright (353), Graham Jennings (351), Rod Brown (347), David Lowe (345), Alan Hunter (343), Steve Blair (338), Joe Mullen (334), Ian Gray (332), Paul Wade (331), Peter Katholos (329), Alan Davidson (326), Paul Trimboli (318), Jean-Paul De Marigny (318), Marshall Soper (318), David Ratcliffe (316), Robbie Hooker (315), Charlie Yankos (308), Gerry Gomez (303), Bugsy Nyskohous (300) and Jeff Olver (300)



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Gunsights aimed at ARSENAL

Arguably returning to its former place on the international sporting dais as the world's number one domestic football competition, the English Premier League is geared up for another compelling season. Here Mark Seymour provides the form guide to the 1998/99 campaign.

As another English Premier League campaign gets underway, armchair managers and long-suffering fans the world over are all talking up their team's chances and debating over who'll take the dreaded drop, who'll win the ultimate prize come May and who'll just go nowhere at all.

Never an easy league to pick, the English top division nevertheless has its usual suspects like any other. Some teams will inevitably be there or thereabouts, while others always just seem to make up the numbers in this most lucrative of domestic club competitions.

Breaking the 20 teams up into four groups of 'contenders', 'possibles', 'also-rans' and 'relegation fodder', analysis should begin at the top with last season's winners Arsenal.

CONTENDERS

Not content with winning the League and FA Cup double for a record-equalling second

time (with Man Utd), Arsene Wenger's French players Patrick Vieira and Emmanuel Petit then had to go on and lift the World Cup. Unlikely as they are to ever top that particular season they would nevertheless expect to challenge strongly for honours again this term, with Argentinian defender Nelson Vivas bought over the northern summer to bolster an ageing defence. Despite the exit of Gunners legend Ian Wright to West Ham and the possibility of several World Cup sized hangovers for Wenger's star-studded squad, the champions should be a fixture near the summit all season long. Wenger's management style seems to finally be paying dividends with Marc Overmars and Dennis Bergkamp finding some stunning form when most needed during the run-in to last season's climax. Their only distraction may come from a testing Champions League competition, which as Manchester United found to their cost in 1997/98, can be fatal.

As for Alex Ferguson's men, no greater motivation is needed than a trophy-less season. Ferguson has made big summer signings in the world's most expensive defender Jaap Stam and winger Jesper Blomqvist. Gone are veterans Gary Pallister and Brian McClair, along with reserve goalkeeper Kevin Pilkington. A big-name striker has also been on Ferguson's mind along with the desire to take back what United in the 1990s consider to be their crown.

Liverpool, perhaps sensing the need for a shake-up in the party atmosphere (at least on the pitch) at Anfield have recruited former

technical director of the French Football Association Gerard Houllier as co-manager alongside Roy Evans. Many of Liverpool supporters were surprised to see Evans remain in the managerial hot-seat and this unusual step may be the first sign in an unwillingness to wait much longer for success honours. Despite failing to land Spurs defender Sol Campbell to bolster a decidedly fragile defence, Liverpool will no doubt be formidable if unpredictable opponents arise always. Uninspiring seasons from Karlheinz Riedle and Patrik Berger won't help their longevity at Anfield, although the return of defender Steve Staunton and the emergence of teenage World Cup star Michael Owen keep fading Scouse hopes alive.

Chelsea, after having a successful Cup season (FA and Cup-Winners Cups) will be hoping to land the really big fish this time with manager Gianluca Vialli spending more than £12 million on new signings. Chelsea's challenge is scrutinised elsewhere in this but it is certain they will expect to improve last season's creditable fourth placing.

POSSIBLES

Only newly promoted Division One champions Nottingham Forest may be there or thereabouts as outsiders. Forest have traditionally performed well when they bounce back up to the top division and while the days of Clough and Co. winning European Cups may have gone, Forest could well turn out to be a dark horse in this race.

Blackburn, having sold stalwart Scott Hendry to Rangers, may leak more goals



ously, but Tim Flowers remains an
essive keeper while Chris Sutton seems
t on proving himself as one of England's
overlooked strikers. Their improvement
r manager Roy Hodgson should continue
season, along with Aston Villa. Restless
ng staff aside, Villa has some exceptional
t and a manager in John Gregory who is
ranger to mind games and motivational
s. Inconsistent injury victim Stan
more won't start the season but he
tly proved himself fighting fit in a
ch bar, allegedly beating up his TV
onality girlfriend after she got more
tion than he did. Although Brazilian
who declined to join the Midlands,
ie Mark Bosnich makes Villa a team to be
oned with.

ALSO-RANS

ere you'll find perennial favourites like
s, where Sydney-born Harry Kewell and
y-Floyd Hasselbaink struggle to excite in
ge Graham's dour team. No major
ngs and an unlikely repeat of last
on's fifth place mark them down as a
not to watch. Tottenham Hotspur and
castle will also be happy with mid-table
es come May after last season's flirtation
relegation. Newcastle manager Kenny
lish may find himself under pressure if
er golden boy Alan Shearer continues his
return to form. New striker, Frenchman
hane Guivarc'h, showed in the World Cup
nows where the goal is, if not how to put
ball into it, so Shearer will need to be
t to his best. Christian Gross will be
ng himself under similar strain at Spurs,
re Les Ferdinand and David Ginola will no
ot be considering their diminishing options
re the season is out.

Wimbledon, Middlesbrough, Derby County
Sheffield Wednesday could all make a
ent team if a merger were being
sidered, but individually they'll just be
oy to keep their Premiership places. With
Merson and Gascolgne joined by the
erience of Gary Pallister, Middlesbrough
d make a play for the top half of the
e, while Sheffield Wednesday also show
ition with the arrival of Dutch midfielder
Jonk. New boss Danny Wilson will want

to hold on to the Italian combination of Di
Canio and Carbone to keep the fans happy
and the goals flowing.

Derby and Wimbledon for their part can
only hope to pick up some cheap signings as
they have done successfully in the past and
will always prove thorny, if inconsistent
opposition.

RELEGATION FODDER

This will seem familiar territory to the
likes of Coventry and Southampton. Season
after season these two battle against the
odds and more often than not manage to stay
up on the final day of the season. Coventry
will be hoping their amazing run in the top
division continues with favourite Dion Dublin
re-signing.

Southampton manager David Jones has
signed former Chelsea and Man Utd striker
Mark Hughes along with Blackburn winger
Stuart Ripley. If David Hirst overcomes his
season-threatening injury these three front-
runners alone should justify Saints fans' die-
hard optimism. Match-winner Matt Le Tissier
can always be relied upon to conjure up
something special and he'll no doubt have the
burden of expectation on his shoulders once
again.

Everton has secured Scot John Collins
from Monaco after a disappointing World Cup
and new manager, former Rangers boss
Walter Smith, will hope the diminutive
midfielder can bring out the best in fiery
Duncan Ferguson. Everton fans will expect
nothing less than mid-table safety after last
season's goal-difference, last-gasp escape
from the drop.

Charlton Athletic and Leicester will both
find the going tough. Charlton look like being
the Barnsley of this campaign with the pace
and power of the Premiership proving too
much for the smaller clubs who come up. Their
fans may well enjoy the ride more than the
players do.

SUMMARY

The huge influx of foreign players into
England's premier division continues, with
Chelsea and Arsenal leading the way in terms
of star-pulling power and spiralling wages.
Many observers see this trend as a
destructive turn for the worse, denying many

young native players their chance at exposure
in England's top clubs. Interestingly,
Frenchman Arsene Wenger himself recently
voiced this concern when asked his position.
Few fans of either Arsenal or Chelsea would
support this view, their two clubs winning the
League title, FA Cup, League Cup, and
European Cup-Winners Cup between them
last term. Money brings success and it would
seem the same four cash-rich clubs will
feature at the top again come mid-May, but in
what order?

WE SAY.....IT'S CHELSEA

Yes, Patrick Mangan's story elsewhere in
this issue has been enough to sway the
doubters here at Soccer Australia magazine.

According to our poll of staff experts
Chelsea will break a 44-year drought and win
the English Premier League title, but not
before a nail-biting finish.

Patrick's compelling story on Chelsea's
glamorous foreign legion was enough to tip
the scales, but there was little to split the
leading contenders, which included
Liverpool, Manchester United and title-
holders Arsenal, as well as surprise-packets
Newcastle United.

HERE'S HOW WE PREDICT THE PREMIERSHIP RACE TO END:

CHELSEA
LIVERPOOL
MANCHESTER UNITED
NEWCASTLE UNITED
ARSENAL
MIDDLESBROUGH
ASTON VILLA
COVENTRY CITY
NOTTINGHAM FOREST
LEEDS UNITED
DERBY COUNTY
WEST HAM UNITED
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY
BLACKBURN ROVERS
LEICESTER CITY
WIMBLEDON
EVERTON
SOUTHAMPTON
CHARLTON ATHLETIC

Bellissimi

Chelsea's foreign legion lights up Stamford Bridge

The foreign revolution sweeping English soccer is typified by Chelsea, a club where there are so many Europeans in the squad it's possible that local players won't get a look in this season. Globetrotting Soccer Australia editor Patrick Mangan examines England's latest glamour team.

When Arsenal paid \$16 million for Dennis Bergkamp in 1995, cross-town rivals Tottenham were unimpressed. Spurs chairman Alan Sugar complained about the fad where any old "Carlos Kickball" with a video of half a dozen decent goals he'd scored for Sporting Gijon (or any one of a hundred clubs English fans hadn't heard of) would be making his way over here while the going was good. But when it was raining throughout the dismal British winter these players would disappear, said Sugar.

Three years later, the only thing vanishing is Sugar's prejudice, as even his beloved Tottenham began the 1998/99 campaign with French, Swiss, Italian, Moroccan, Danish and Norwegian players on their books.

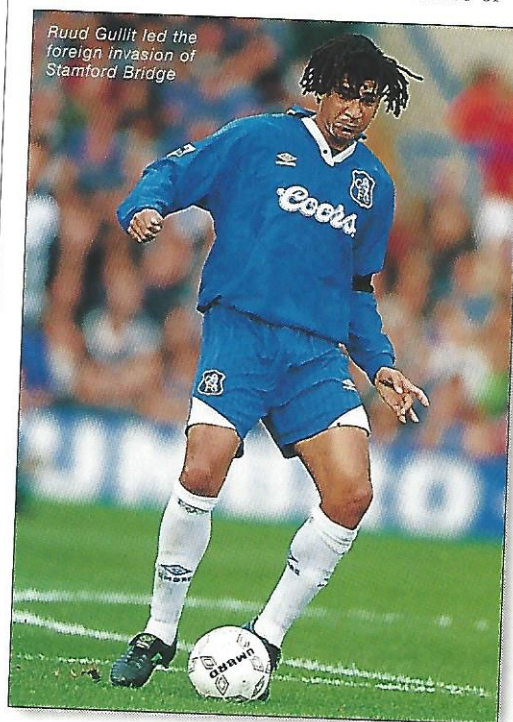
For proof that the Europeans are here to stay in English football, look no further than a couple of miles up the Seven Sisters Road at Arsenal, which won the championship last season due in no small part to the influence of French and Dutch stars (Bergkamp himself didn't have a bad year, you might remember).

But if you want to get to the heart of England's newly-acquired taste for overseas talent, it's another London club, Chelsea, which needs the closest examination.

As the season kicked off, Chelsea was able to field an entire starting XI of non-English players, and the insularity which has stunted the growth of British football over the past half century is under threat. Out Chelsea way, the only Englishman guaranteed a spot even on the bench these days is Blues assistant coach, Graham Rix.

But if a foreign invasion is what it takes to propel Chelsea into the ranks of the Premiership superpowers, there will be few complaints from the club's long-suffering supporters. The Blues have had their fans tearing their hair out for most of the modern era, their inconsistency the stuff of footballing legend.

Ask any Chelsea fan, whose memories of



Ruud Gullit led the foreign invasion of Stamford Bridge

occasional exhilarating victories over Liverpool or Manchester United have been matched with frustrating regularity by embarrassing defeats to teams not fit to lace the boots of the London glamour boys - on paper, at least.

A 6-0 hammering by lowly Rotherham in a second division game in the early 80s seems a reasonable starting point for any discussion

about why masochism is an essential element in supporting the lads from Stamford Bridge.

Despite (or perhaps because of) their devastating inconsistency, Chelsea has been one of England's most popular clubs for decades. A solitary league championship win in 1955, supplemented only by a brief period in the late 60s and early 70s when the Blues won the FA Cup and European Cup Winners Cup, wasn't much to show for almost a hundred years' existence, but everything changed at Chelsea with the arrival of Glenn Hoddle as a manager in 1993.

Chairman Ken Bates' hiring of Hoddle proved a masterstroke. Not only did the former Spurs and England playmaker transform an emerging Chelsea team with his finesse on the park, the reputation Hoddle had forged throughout Europe made the club an attractive proposition to overseas players who otherwise may not have thought twice about joining a poorly-credentialled London team.

Ruud Gullit was one such player and the day he first posed in a Chelsea shirt in mid-1995 marked the beginning of the foreign invasion at the Bridge which has continued unabated since.

And who better to lead the invasion - with Gullit arriving in England as one of the most highly-decorated footballers in history, his trophy cabinet replete with everything from Italian championship to European Cup to European championship medals.

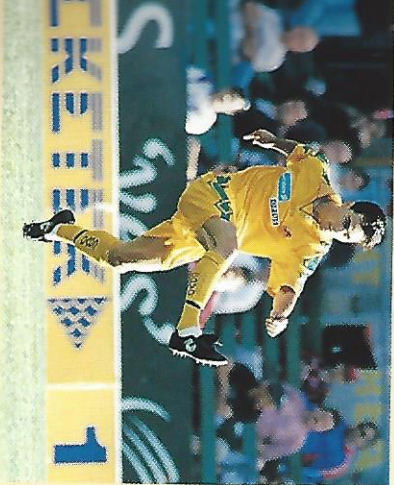
Gullit quickly became the Blues' main man on the field, and when Hoddle was tempted by

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Gianfranco Zola

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an offer to manage the English national team, the dreadlocked Dutchman took the reins at Chelsea.

It was a shock to the system of the more conservative local fans - who in their right mind would have predicted that a Chelsea team would ever be managed by a former European champion with braided hair falling all over his face?

Gullit continued where Hoddle had left off, rapidly building a team to be reckoned with. Along with the high-profile signing of Gullit's former Sampdoria team-mate, Gianluca Vialli, fellow Italians Roberto Di Matteo and Gianfranco Zola, and French stopper Franck Le Boeuf joined the Blues in quick succession, and Chelsea was soon beating a path towards major honours.

The consistency needed to win the championship was proving elusive, but Hoddle's 1994 achievement of leading Chelsea to a first FA Cup final appearance for 24 years was quickly overshadowed by his successor in the Stamford Bridge hotseat.

In 1997, Gullit took Chelsea to its first major trophy in a quarter of a century, a 2-0 FA Cup win against relegated Middlesbrough. Fittingly, the opening goal of the game, within the first minute, was scored by one of the Dutch manager's shrewdest buys - Di Matteo almost tearing the net with his 25-metre screamer.

Gullit was fast becoming a hero of near-biblical proportions. But in an almost biblical cautionary tale, the Dutchman seemed to want too much, too soon. Early this year, with the club riding high in the Premiership, with a place booked in the semi-final of the League Cup and the quarter-final of the European Cup Winners Cup, Gullit was axed.

The story goes that Gullit demanded a king's ransom when negotiating his managerial contract, and the club's famously prickly chairman, Bates, saw red.

Vialli took charge with the dust barely settled, and the expression on his face at the media conference to announce his appointment suggested he was no less surprised that anyone else to find himself elevated from Gullit's sparingly-used supersub to player-manger of one of the most

glamorous teams in England.

Within a matter of weeks, the former Juventus star had presided over the most successful period in Chelsea's history, with two major trophies claimed. A 2-0 win over Middlesbrough (again) in the League Cup final was followed by victory over VfB Stuttgart in the European Cup Winners Cup final, a first European triumph for an English club since 1994.

Zola came off the bench against the Germans to score a late winner and claim his place as a Stamford Bridge immortal, but by the beginning of the current campaign he was just another attacking player in a squad bulging with international talent.

After a close-season in which the Danish wizard Brian Laudrup and Italian striker Pierluigi Casiraghi joined French World Cup winner Marcel Desailly and Spaniard Albert Ferrer as the latest arrivals, Chelsea's league of nations assault for honours in 1998/99 was complete.

Thirteen countries competed in the first World Cup in 1930 and remarkably Chelsea now boasts representatives from as many nations, with players from as far afield as Scandinavia, South America and Africa.

The jury is out as to whether signing a disparate group of stars from around the world is a recipe for success or for trouble - witness AC Milan's woes in recent years - but you won't hear too many complaints from supporters of the Stamford Bridge side.

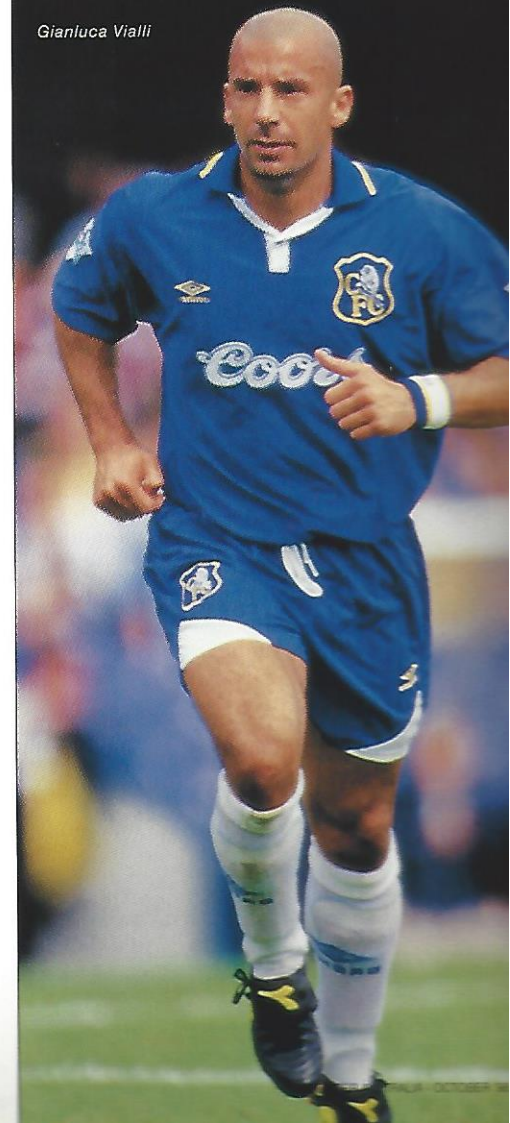
With memories of struggling in the old second division in the late 1980s all too fresh, a season of sitting at the Bridge watching Desailly, Laudrup, Casiraghi, Zola, and even the boss Vialli in action, is a treat the Blues faithful would scarcely have believed possible just five or six years ago.

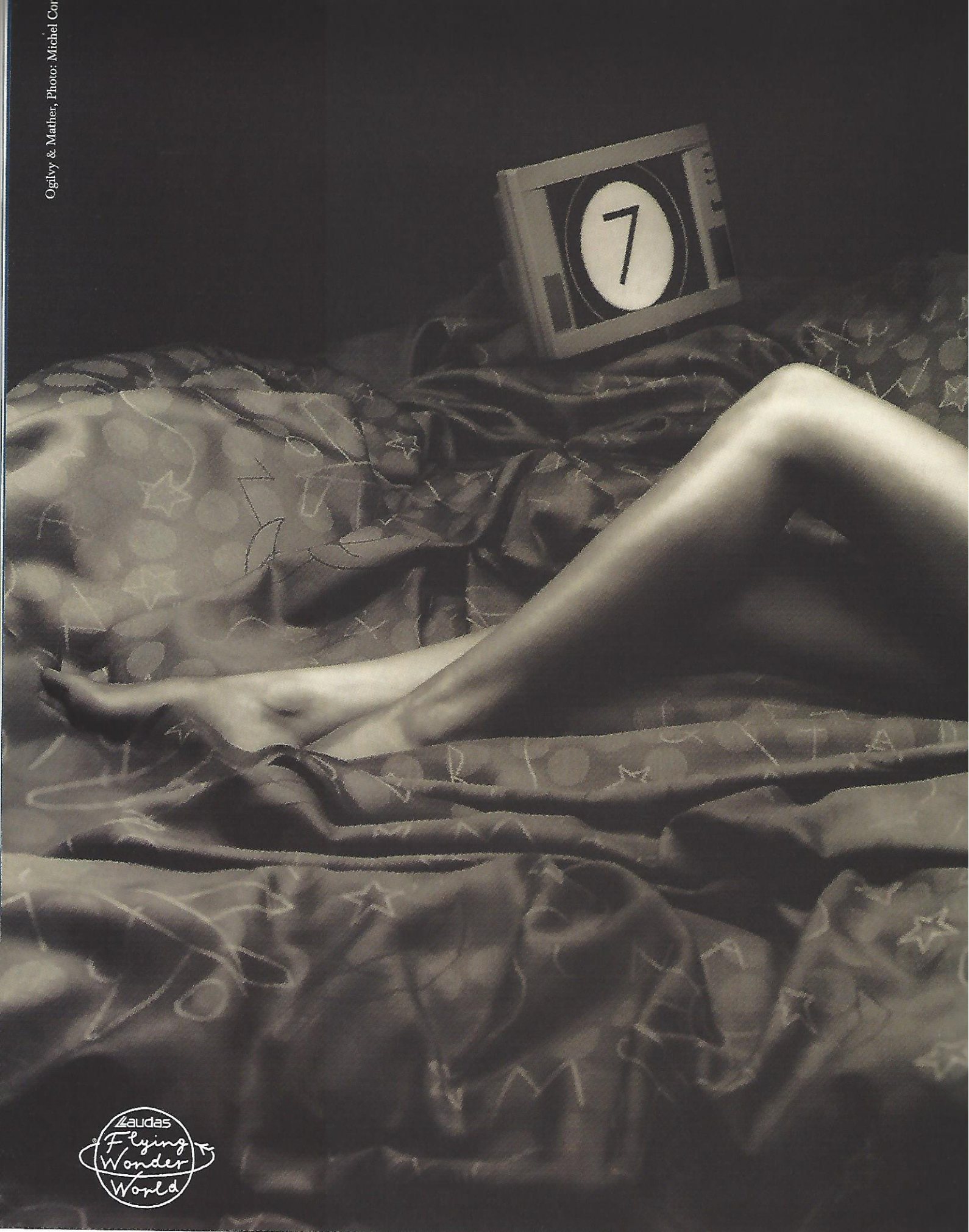
Now all the players have to do is knock off Arsenal, Manchester United, Liverpool and co. and win the championship to justify the massive outlay the club has made in the last couple of years.

A pleasant problem for a club which hasn't won the title for nearly half a century. Just ask any Chelsea fan - the Blues, thanks to an ever-expanding foreign legion, are back in the big time at last.



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Northern Exposure

According to our man on the spot for this story, Ray Gatt, the 1998/99 appearance of new Ericsson Cup club Northern Spirit is "one of the most exciting things to happen to the local game in many a year." However the national jury is still out on the largely experimental Sydney club, with prototype model Carlton yet to dramatically impact at the turnstiles and WA's Perth Glory unable to turn box office success into on-field achievement.

There was a time not so long ago when Remo Nogarotto was the "boss man" for one of the most powerful and successful soccer clubs in Australia. Under his chairmanship of the football section of Club Marconi, the Stallions won two grand finals in the late 1980's and were beaten in another.

A young man with superb business skills, a sharp look and intelligence to boot, Nogarotto was a man on the go. It was no secret he was being groomed for higher things in the game, with a role on the board of Soccer Australia beckoning. But, as quickly as he arrived on the scene, he was gone.

These days Nogarotto's passion for the game still burns brightly even if his interests

and energies have switched from the working class areas of Sydney's south western suburbs to the "silvertails" of Sydney's north shore. To many, it is a stark contrast, but one for which Nogarotto makes no apologies.

As chairman of new Ericsson Cup national league club Northern Spirit, he is now the face of one of the most exciting things to happen to the local game in many a year. The entry into the NSL of a club like Northern Spirit, with its charter to develop and promote the sport on the north shore, is long overdue. When Spirit kicks off its first match at picturesque North Sydney Oval it will be the fruition of 18 months of hard work for Nogarotto and his good mate and club vice-chairman Emmanuel Zammit, who have lived and breathed the club.

To say Nogarotto is excited is an understatement. "I honestly believe we are one of the most exciting things to happen to Australian soccer for many years," he says. "The NSL, and the north shore, has been crying out for this. "The league in Sydney has been virtually moribund and we present the best chance to change things around. "A lot of time, effort and research has gone into this venture and I am super confident we will succeed."

Nogarotto makes no secret of his determination for Spirit to carry no ethnic

baggage. The NSL has struggled over the years because of the perception clubs pandered solely to ethnic groups. "We are not Italian, Scottish, Macedonian, Greek, Croatian or whatever," he says defiantly. "We are starting with a clean sheet. We have no ethnic ties whatsoever. "But, we will welcome everyone to our club. We are universal and will embrace people from every walk of life."

Apart from Nogarotto and Zammit, the board includes Sydney City councillor Kathryn Greiner, the wife of former NSW Premier Nick Kerry Chikarovski, the Liberal State MP for Lance Cove and former Marconi and Young Socceroo striker Rene Licata, who owns a part share of the club. The major stakeholder (70 per cent) of Spirit is Mark Goldberg, one of the richest entrepreneurs in Britain and owner of English first division club, Crystal Palace.

Spirit has left nothing to chance in its bid to capture a large slice of the Sydney sport's market. They have hired the best coaching staff, some of the best Australian talent in and outside the country, an excellent management team and aligned themselves with some of the best junior nurseries in Sydney. Spirit will have a tremendous base of about 25,000 kids who play in the Manly Warringah, Gladesville Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai districts.



Double Trouble.
Spirit's marquee signings,
Graham Arnold (above)
and Robbie Slater.



Nogarotto fairly bristles when the "cynics" jump to conclusions regarding Crystal Palace's involvement with the club.

Almost immediately the whispers around soccer circles here centered on Palace manager Terry Venables, well known to local fans as the former Socceroo coach, and his involvement in the deal. Which was why Nogarotto was at pains to dispel the rumours during a press conference to announce the Palace takeover at North Sydney Oval in August. "I was prepared for that question," Nogarotto said when a television interviewer quizzed him about Venables. "I can tell you categorically that Terry Venables has no financial equity whatsoever in Northern Spirit... and we would not be prepared to accept anything else in that regard. "Terry will have no directorship because we are only interested in his football mind."

Nogarotto describes Palace's involvement with Spirit as "one of the most exciting things to happen to Australian soccer - the benefits are enormous, both for Palace and Spirit," he said. Financially, Spirit will receive an immediate cash infusion... an initial working capital of \$2 million which, according to Nogarotto, makes his club "one of the wealthiest, stand-alone football clubs in Australia." And Spirit hasn't even kicked a ball in anger.

Of course, there's also scope for interchanging of players and for coach Graham Arnold to travel to London to learn new ideas from Venables.

A Malaysian group which had bought into the club has divested much of its interest, although Spirit Services still hold equity on their behalf.

Arnie & Bulldog Mates on a mission

Northern Spirit knew it would require the acquisition of at least one marquee signing to help sell the new product. As luck would have it the league's newest club managed to secure two of the best in Robbie Slater and Graham Arnold.

He was the centre of attention... and he appeared to enjoy every minute of it.

As the television and newspaper cameras followed his every move, there was a definite spring in the step as he found that extra little bit of pace or added a bit more venom to his shots on goal.

With his closely-cropped ginger head bobbing around and mouth going a hundred miles an hour, the figure with the powerful legs was unmistakable. Yes, that's the Bulldog, or, as he is known in Australian soccer circles, Robbie Slater.

Watched by a gaggle of media types and his wife and two kids sitting on the hill of North Sydney Oval, Slater was relishing the sunny Sydney morning as he went through his first training session with Northern Spirit. He didn't look like he'd only been back in the country less than 48 hours. He looked more like a 17-year-old tasting the big time for the first time.

Incredibly, Slater has turned his back on a two-year contract with English club Wolves to join the Spirit on a three-year deal which will see out his illustrious career.

The lure of playing with and under his best mate Graham Arnold and the thought of begin involved in one of the most exciting things to happen to Australian soccer in years was too much for him to ignore.

With the blessing of Wolves, who released him from the final years of his contract, Slater packed his bags and his young family - wife Natalie, daughter Victoria and son Tom - and returned home to play in the Ericsson Cup for the first time in 10 years.

He admits coming back to Sydney to finish his career was the last thing he had envisaged three months ago.

"I really thought it would never happen (playing in the NSL again)," he said. "I was ready to finish my career in England in a couple of years then moving to France to live. But, Arnie did a lot of talking and convincing and here I am. Now that it has happened I am so excited."

As the club's first captain, Slater is looking forward to the challenge of putting Spirit into the hearts and minds of the Australian soccer community. "I think we



Slater in action for West Ham.

have a lot to offer. The club has a terrific base, great board, fantastic playing roster and a coaching staff which will add a new dimensions to the game in this country," he boldly predicted.

And he believes Arnold will be an instant success as a coach. "Like me, Arnie has played overseas for 10 years," he said. "He has worked under some wonderful coaches and was smart enough to pick up ideas from them. 'Whatever Arnie does, he does full on. There are no short cuts and this team will benefit from that.'

Slater's 10-year career in Europe was a rollercoaster ride at times before he eventually carved out his own niche. "I have no regrets about my career overseas, it has been an experience and a half," he said. "But Spirit is a new path for me and I cannot wait

himself in the toughest of professions. Only time will tell whether Arnold has the magic formula which will transform him from a great player into a great coach.

Football history is a litany of great players who just could not make the transformation from the field to the coach's bench, yet there is no reason to suggest Arnold will join those statistics. His former Socceroo teammates Frank Farina (Brisbane Strikers now Marconi) and Eddie Krncevic (Carlton) have already shown that clubs can prosper by taking the gamble with first-time coaches. In his debut as a coach Farina took the Strikers to their first Ericsson Cup title while Krncevic, who was in a similar situation to which Arnold now finds himself, took a new club from scratch and got them to within 90 minutes of a championship.

for the new season to kick off."

Neither, it seems, can Arnold.

Watching Arnold in action on a crisp Sydney winter's morning at North Sydney Oval as he directs the players, runs through the drills and coaxes them to run that extra metre it is hard to imagine that here we have a novice and not some seasoned 15-year campaigner. Indeed, there is an air of confidence and determination around him, an aura which says he was born to be a coach.

It's early days yet, but the signs are there that "Arnie", as he is known to his mates, is well on the way to making a successful niche for

After 10 years plying his trade on the playing fields of Europe and Japan, Arnold has come home to put something back into the game which has been his lifeblood. He could not have asked for a greater challenge than the one which faces him at Northern Spirit but he brings with him a wealth of experience. He was smart enough to return soon after landing in Europe to join Dutch club, Roda, that his playing career would last forever and that coaching would eventually be an option.

Arnold took advantage of several opportunities to look over how clubs such as Ajax ran their business, often spending a week at a time to see how the coaching system worked.

What he saw blew him away. "It was another world over there," he said. "The system is remarkable from the juniors right up to the seniors. It is all interlinked. We learn so much from their system."

Arnold took in everything, gleaning new ideas and information from the various coaches he played under. Now he plans to put that to good use at Spirit... and it is already showing. Watching his training sessions, you could see the players were enjoying themselves as they ran through new and interesting drills. It was a new world for them. "This is a great opportunity for me," Arnold admits. "I'm grateful for the chance Spirit has given me, but I am confident I can do the job."

Under Arnold and assistant coach Ian Gray, Spirit will be fully professional and train twice a day. The club will have 18 players, their books, plus four apprentices. "We train in the morning and afternoon," Arnold said. "Everything is laid out for the players. We provide them with the training gear, which is washed by the apprentices after each session. After the morning session a bus takes us to the North Sydney Leagues club where lunch is provided. We have a little break then return for the second session."

Without doubt, this is the biggest challenge of his illustrious career, but, as is typical with 'Arnie', he is taking it all in his stride. "I've been looking to do something like this for the last few years," he told Soccer Australia. "It's an exciting concept and I believe we can succeed on and off the field."

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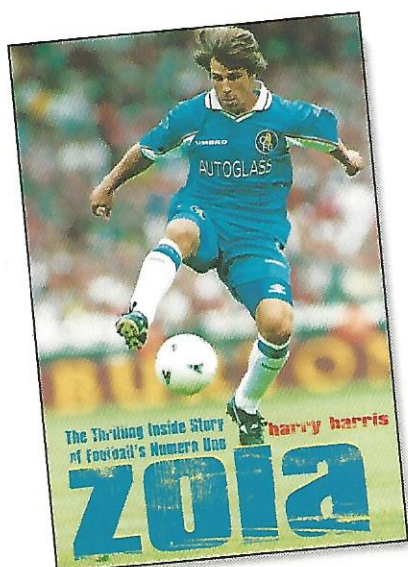
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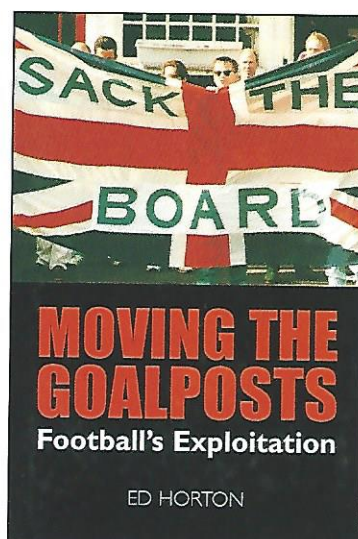
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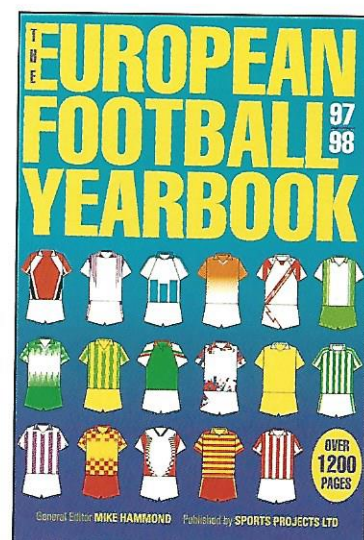
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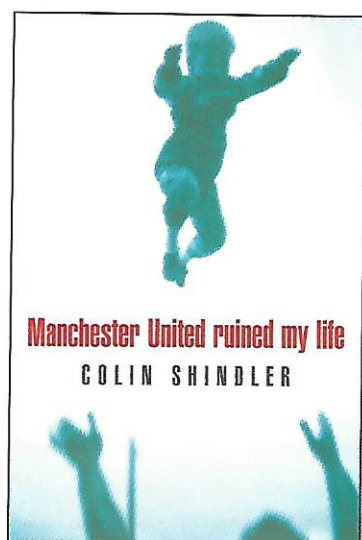
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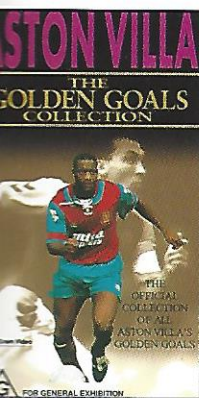
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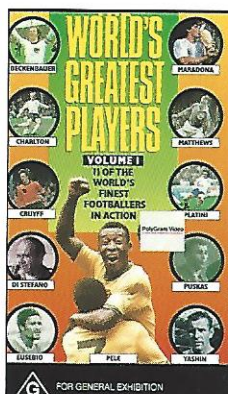
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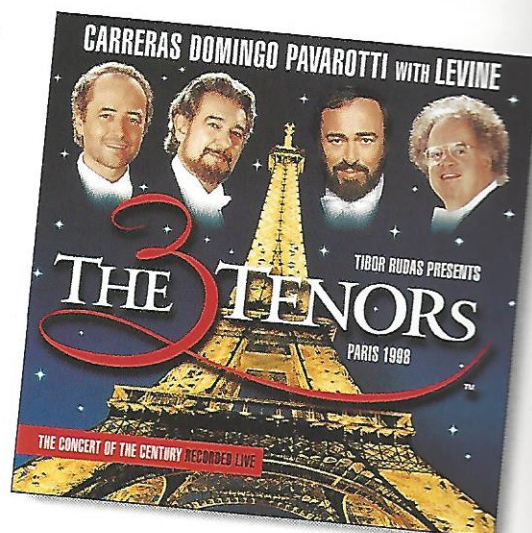
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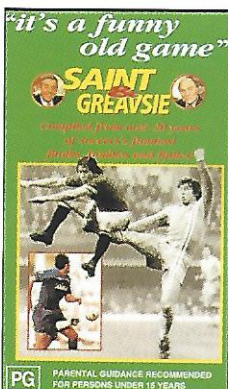
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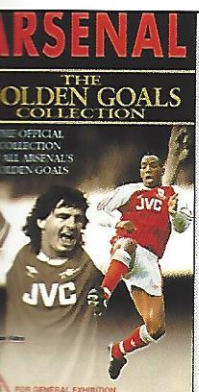
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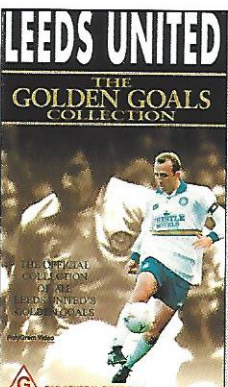
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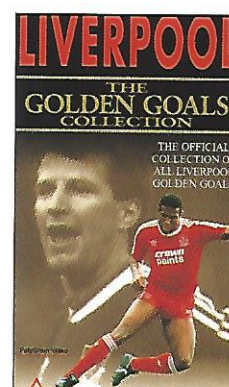
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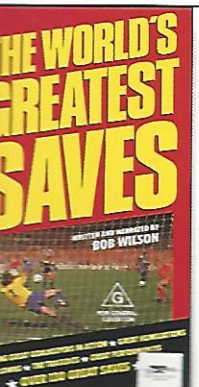
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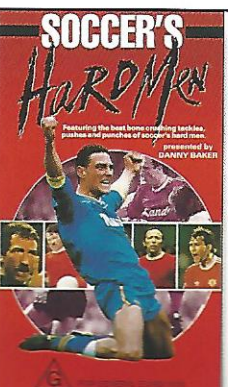
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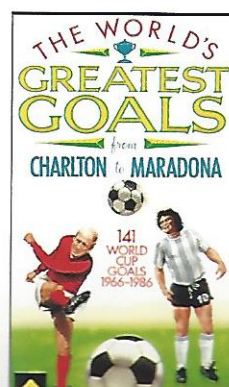
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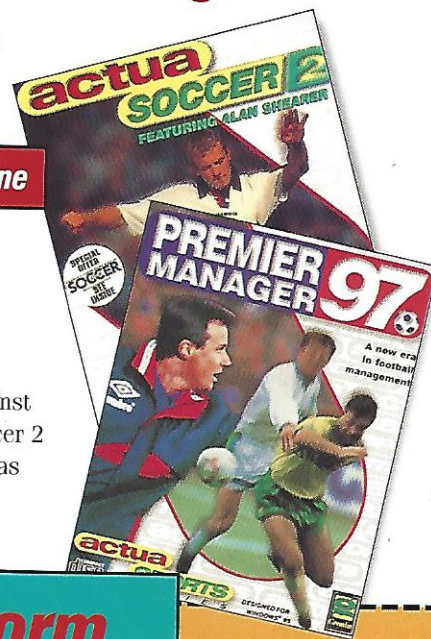
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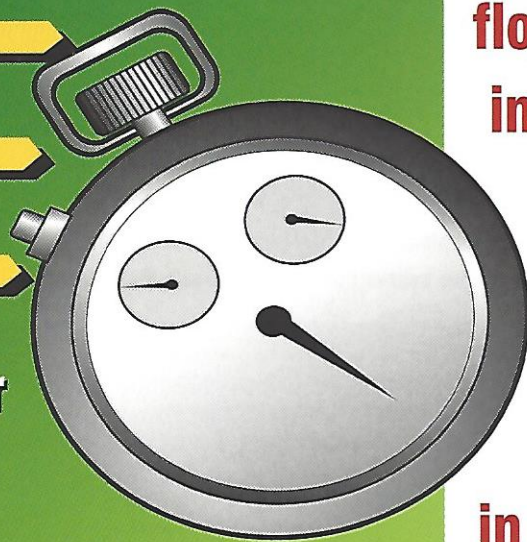
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**News, Gossip & Humour
on the World Game**

compiled by Greg Blake



The waiting is over and the League's newest club is ready to roll off the showroom floor. Here is all the info you might need to know about the players who will shape the fortunes of Northern Spirit in 1998/99.

That's the spirit

The expectations about Northern Spirit are enormous.

Unlike the similarly experimental Ericsson Cup debutants of recent years, the newest and most ambitious player on the Sydney scene is hoping for an immediate full-frontal assault on league attendance figures.

Where Perth Glory had initially hoped for a 4,000 or better figure in their inaugural home game two seasons ago and Carlton SC went into their very first home game of 1997/98 banking on around 7,000, Northern Spirit is raising the bar significantly.

According to David Mason from Javelin Australia the club is hoping for in excess of 18,000 through the turnstiles for Spirit's home debut at the 22,000-capacity North Sydney Oval.

That would already constitute a new league regular season record, breaking a Newcastle home gate of 18,367 set nearly two decades ago.

Mason also believes that an opening

season home average of around 10,000 per game is attainable despite only two clubs in league history - Newcastle KB United in 1978 and Perth Glory in 1996/97 - having been that box office friendly in their inaugural seasons.

Bouyed by the success of pre-season club membership sales and an estimated 6,000 crowd which turned out for a family day at the ground, Northern Spirit is hoping to tap into a local catchment area which includes some 25,000 registered players of a total population exceeding 500,000.

Mason also believes that the combination of playing floodlit Friday night home games and an impressive playing roster will further enhance the chances of success at the turnstiles.

Inevitably, the bulk of the responsibility for maintaining initial supporter interest will fall on the coaching and playing staff, the club banking on fielding a winning senior team from day one.

After much speculation the league's newest club settled on the following roster to take the club into the 1998/99 season.

Head Coach: Graham Arnold

Assistant Coach: Ian Gray

Goalkeeping Coach:

Steve Watson

Captain: Robbie Slater

Senior Players: Arnold, Slater, Ian Crook, Luke Casserly, Scott Ollerenshaw, Paul Bilokapic, Clayton Zane, Kresimir Marusic, Mark Rudan, Troy Granney, Eddie Bosnar, Michael Cunico, Tony Perinich, Gabriel Mendez, John Perosh, Nick Purdue, Paul Wearne, Peter Blazincic, Phil Moss

Apprentices: Paul Henderson, Matthew Langdon, Daniel Watkins, James Stubbs-Mills

We say it's Blue & White Heaven

South Melbourne is set to become only fourth side to repeat as champions of the Ericsson Cup and the first since the Melbourne Knights dominated the mid-1980's.

That's the view of the staff of Soccer Australia magazine, who pooled their thoughts to come up with

how we think the 1998/99 season will take shape.

Only Sydney City (1980, 1981 and 1982), Marconi (1988 and 1989) and Melbourne Knights (1994/95 and 1995/96) have gone back-to-back as national champions in the previous 22 seasons of the NSL, but we believe all-conquering South Melbourne has

what it takes to join the ranks of the elite.

And no place in the top six for the league's oldest and newest club, Northern Spirit, although we suspect they'll go close in the race for the final.

Here's how the experts rate the teams for the new season.

1st SOUTH MELBOURNE

After winning six of their last seven finals games South Melbourne's finals hoodoo is dead and buried. All this team needs to do is to get to the play-offs to be a threat and that shouldn't be a problem, with this team boasting the best regular season record of any club in the 55-game period since coach Angie Postecoglou took charge.

2nd MARCONI FAIRFIELD

Favourite son Frank Farina returns to a club which has marked time in between two fleeting grand final appearances in the decade since the Stallions owned the Ericsson Cup. Based on last season's mini-revival we're backing Marconi to take another step under the little champ.

3rd WOLLONGONG CITY

The dashing Wolves stole our hearts last season and we're hoping for a repeat effort. Although they'll not take anyone by surprise this time around the spirit about the place is still buoyant and with fans flocking to Brandon Park in unprecedented numbers the road trips to the 'Gong this year will take on a nightmarish quality for opposing teams.

4th ADELAIDE CITY

With some ageing stars and an unsettled roster Adelaide City is in no shape to go all the way and return to the glory days. However three times championship-winning coach Zoran Matic returns and only a very stupid person would bet against a club which has been to the finals for nine consecutive seasons combined with a coach who has missed the play-offs once in his last eight years.

5th PERTH GLORY

It's now or never time for Perth, who have under-achieved on the park since joining the league in a blaze of glory in 1996/97. Rarely has Perth

earned its fanatical home town support but under new coach Bernt Stange and boasting enigmatic John Markovski this season could be pay back time to the fans.

6th SYDNEY OLYMPIC

An impressive new coaching staff and an administration hell-bent on dragging this club into the world of professionalism and the 1990's suggests a heady revival for a club close to self-destruction not too long ago. Olympic is about to take the first step forward in many years.

7th CARLTON

They won't be taking anyone by surprise as they did last year and it will be interesting to see how some of the lesser lights to shine last year stand up to the pressure of being the hunted rather than the hunters this year. Andrew Marth will be an asset but sure to miss the creativity of Kresimir Marusic and enigmatic genius of John Markovski.

8th NORTHERN SPIRIT

The Spirit might be willing but does coach Graham Arnold have the cattle to make a genuine impact? Arnold and Robbie Slater are top shelf and they've got some handy pick-ups in Luke Casserley and one or two others, but we say there or thereabouts in the top six race at best. However, for those looking for an omen bet the key is Marusic, who has taken three different clubs to grand finals in his three seasons in the Ericsson Cup.

9th SYDNEY UNITED

Big David Mitchell did the best coaching job of the last five years to get what was left of Sydney United to the finals last year but we can't see it happening again. The bar has been raised considerably by several clubs and United just doesn't have the guns to match it.

10th MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

An era ended with the loss of Andrew Marth to Carlton and it may take some time for the Knights to rebuild to a point where the finals are again a realistic possibility. So far the decline has been gradual, edging into the play-offs two years ago and just missing out last year. This time around they won't get that close.

11th CANBERRA COSMOS

If there is anything to be found in Canberra's playing roster Rale Rasic will find it. We don't think there's much there but Rasic has a track record of finding rays of light in darkness and Canberra will improve by grinding out a share of results.

12th ADELAIDE SHARKS

Plenty of new faces and an experienced coach Manfred Schaefer on board to try and revitalise a club which has wallowed in mediocrity for far too long. It might happen, but it won't happen overnight.

13th BRISBANE STRIKERS

John Kosmina gets the chance to put some life back into a team in transition since that marvellous title win two years back. As much of an unknown quantity as any team at this point, we still can't see them matching the big guns.

14th NEWCASTLE BREAKERS

Still a basically young team with huge potential, but we'd like to see some tangible proof of progress before suggesting the Breakers can make any significant headway.

15th GIPPSLAND FALCONS

A club, sadly, in decline and we predict a very bleak summer for the fast-flagging Falcons.

"If you love style, spirit and spectacular football, join the club"



Harry Kewell
Leeds United, Socceroo
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Graham Arnold
Player/Coach of The Spirit
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Sydney's northern suburbs have their own new National Soccer League team, The Northern Spirit F.C..

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